"BUY ME."

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY G. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 499. FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 23RD, 1898. [ONE PENNY.

£5 FOR CORRECT ANSWERS

Most Unique Contest of the Age—£5 paid for Correct Lists made by Supplying Missing Letters in Places of Dashes—No Lottery—Popular Plan of Education—Read all the Particulars.

On the vote for public education, Sir John Gorst explained in the House of Commons that it was estimated the sum spent upon education in the course of the coming financial year would be £11,690,000. This sum was an earnest of the conviction of the people that education was a national necessity, and that the country depended for its greatness on an intelligent and instructed population, just as much as it did upon fleets and armies. All readers of this paper will, doubtless, endorse this view, and we, the publishers of "HOMELAND," now offer you an opportunity to display your knowledge and receive most generous payment for a little study. The object of this contest is to give an impetus to many dormant minds to awaken and think; also, we expect by this competition of brains to extend the circulation of "HOMELAND" to such a size that we shall be able to charge double the present rate for advertising in our columns. By this plan of increasing the number of subscriptions, and receiving more money from advertisers of soaps, pianos, medicines, books, baking powders, jewellery, etc., we shall add thousands of pounds a year to our income, and with this mathematical deduction before us, we have decided to operate this most remarkable "missing letters" contest.

HERE'S WHAT YOU ARE TO DO.

There are thirty words in this schedule, from each of which letters have been omitted, and their places have been supplied by dashes. To fill in the blank spaces and get the names properly, you must have some knowledge of geography and history. We want you to spell out as many words as you can, then send to us with a Postal Order for 1/6 to pay for a One Year's Subscription to "HOMELAND." For correct lists we shall give £5 in cash. Also, if your list contains twenty or more correct words, we shall send you a beautiful Egeria Diamond Scarf Pin (for lady or gentleman), the regular price of which is 2/6. Therefore, by sending your list you are positively certain of the 2/6 prize, and by being careful to send a complete list, you have an opportunity of the £5 cash award. The distance that you live from London makes no difference. All have equal opportunity for winning. Full particulars of the prize awards will be published in "HOMELAND."

PRIZES WILL BE SENT PROMPTLY.

Prizes will be honestly awarded and promptly sent. We publish the list of words to be studied out. In making your list of answers, be sure to give the number of each word:

1. **-RA-I-** A country of South America.
2. **-A-I-I-** Name of the largest ocean.
3. **M-D--E--A-E--** A sea.
4. **-M--O-** A large river in South America.
5. **T-A--S** Well-known English river.
6. **G-AS-OW** A great Scotch city.
7. **H------X** A Yorkshire town.
8. **N-A-A-A** Noted for display of water.
9. **PO-TL-ND** A place in England.
10. **-A-RI-** A city of Spain.
11. **H-V--A** A city on a well-known island.
12. **D-BL-N** An Irish city.
13. **G--R-L-A-** Greatest fortification in the world.
14. **S-A-LE-** A great explorer.
15. **C-L-F---I-** One of the United States.
16. **B-SM---K** A noted ruler.
17. **--CTO-I-** Another noted ruler.
18. **P-R-U-A-** A country of Europe.
19. **A-ST-A-I-** A big island. [American.
20. **M--IN-E-** Name of the most prominent
21. **P-R-SM--TH** A famous English seaport.
22. **Y--KS--RE** An English county.
23. **B--G-T-N** A south-coast holiday resort.
24. **T-NN--ON** A noted poet.
25. **W-ST-IN-T-R** A famous abbey.
26. **J-RS-Y** An island in the English Channel.
27. **H-M-L-N-** A popular family magazine.
28. **B-H-I-G** A sea.
29. **A-L-N-I-** An ocean.
30. **M-D-G-S-A-** An island near Africa.

In sending your list of words, mention whether you want prize money sent by cheque, money order, or registered post; we will send any way that winners require. The Egeria Diamond is a perfect imitation of a Real Diamond. We defy experts to distinguish it from real except by microscopic test. In every respect it serves the purpose of Genuine Diamond of purest quality. It is artistically mounted in a fine gold-cased pin, warranted to wear for years. This piece of jewellery will make a most desirable gift to a friend if you do not need it yourself. At present our supply of these gifts is limited, and if they are all gone when your set of answers comes in, we shall send you 2/6 in money instead of the Scarf or Shawl Pin, so you shall either receive the piece of jewellery or the equivalent in cash, in addition to your chance of winning £5 cash prize. This entire offer is an honest one, made by a responsible publishing house. Now study, and exchange light brainwork for cash. With your list of answers send postal order for 1/6 to pay for twelve months' subscription to our family magazine, "HOMELAND," which is only sold by subscription; also send a stamp for immediate reply. If you have already subscribed, mention that fact in your letter, and we will extend your subscription from the time the present one expires.

Address: THE "HOMELAND" PUBLISHING COMPANY (Department 86) 118 and 119 Newgate St., London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

THE
OLIVER TYPEWRITER.

You can read every word as you write it.

THE WORLD'S RECORD MACHINE.

It is a Machine adapted by its simplicity and rapidity to the most arduous requirements of mercantile, literary, or professional uses. At the same time it is the simplest in construction, and the most easy to operate.

EXCELS ANY TYPEWRITING MACHINE IN THE WORLD.

Wholesale and Export Agents: James Spicer & Sons, London and Branches; Waterlow & Sons Ltd., London and Branches; Thomas Turner Ltd., Leicester and London; Pawson & Brailsford, Sheffield; Cartwright & Rattray Ltd., Manchester and London; Bemrose & Sons Ltd., Derby and London; J. Hodgkinson & Co., 4 Bell's Buildings, St. John Street, Liverpool; Henry D. & C. Tapp, Charles Street, Bradford. Also for sale by the Army and Navy Stores Ltd., Westminster, London, S.W., and all first-class Stationers.

AGENTS WANTED. Exceptional Terms given in all towns where not represented. An excellent opportunity to make money. Chief European Offices: **Walbrook House, Walbrook, London, E.C.** Send for our Twenty-five Business Reasons, showing why the Oliver excels all other standard machines.

MAKE PRIME BEER AT HOME

Good! it's **Mason's**

EXTRACT OF HERBS

6D. BOTTLE MAKES **8** GALLONS

NON-INTOXICATING **BEER**

The most palatable refreshing tonic drink producible.

IMITATED but NOT EQUALLED

Of all Chemists and Stores. Also try Mason's Wine Essences and Mason's Coffee Essence. Sample bottle of either of above post FREE for 9d. Two, assorted, 1s. 3d.; Three, assorted, 1s. 8d. *Agents Wanted.*

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

The BEST BEVERAGE for YOUR MEALS.

KEATING'S POWDER

DESTROYS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3D 6D & 1S

A PAINLESS CORN CURE.

BECKWITH'S CORN PLASTER.

THE CERTAIN CURE FOR CORNS; NEVER FAILS.

PRICE 7½d. PER PACKET, POST FREE.

One trial will convince the most sceptical.

Give immediate relief and cures the most obstinate corns in a few days without pain. Free from caustic or any irritant to the skin. **Dispenses with the trouble of cutting corns.** May be worn with the tightest boot. Prepared only by J. B. BECKWITH, Chemist, 139 OAKFIELD ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

A. A sum of from **10/-** to **20/-** per week offered for spare time to either sex everywhere. Work can be done evenings. Send addressed envelope to Box 60, Eclipse Works, 89, Aldersgate Street, London, E.C.

£20 Hairdressers fitted up. Estimates free.

Tobacconists Commencing. See Illd. Guide (239 pages) 3d. How to open a cigar store, £20 to £2,000 **Tobacconists Outfitting Co.**, 186, Euston Road, London. The largest and original house (30 years reputation. Mgr., H. Myers

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK,

Southampton Bldgs., London, W.C.

Invested Funds,

£10,000,000.

Particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.

Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 5 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine. To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL. Balance can be paid 5/- Monthly Call or write for designs and Samples of work.

39/-

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO., 188a, High St., Camden Town, London, N.W. 63 Seven Sisters Road, N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

TRILENE REGD TABLETS THE ONLY CURE for STOUTNESS Registered by GOVERNMENT Price 2/6

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Readily **Reduce Weight** and **Cure Corpu ency Permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are very agreeable, harmless, and never fail to **PRESERVE** both **HEALTH** and **FIGURE** without change of diet. **Reduction begins immediately.**

An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

MISS HEYWOOD, 77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, Lancs., says: "I am 21lb. lighter, and my rheumatism also seems cured."

MRS. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Station Road, Ross, Hereford, says: "Am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st."

MR. CANHAM, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured me of extreme stoutness; it has never returned."

LADY CONSTANCE CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with the Tablets."

PRINCESS LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Laudsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent Tablets directly."

COUNTESS G. FURSTENBERG, Stammheim, Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

MR. BUTLER, Surgeon, Hampton Manor, Evesham, says: "My patient lost more than a stone.

Send 2/6 to THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 6 Pinsbury Pavement, London, E.C.

ZOX

CURES

NEURALGIA

Toothache, Headache, Sciatica, and all Nerve Pains.

PURE, HARMLESS, AND NON-APERIENT.

Do not be persuaded to take a substitute, there is nothing as good as **ZOX.**

Of all Chemists, 1s. and 2s. 6d. per Box.

ZOX Co., 39 MINCING LANE, LONDON, E.C.

PIANOS. UPRIGHT IRON GRAND.

Complete Iron Frame, Brass Pin Plate, Nickel-bolted Wrest Plank, Check Action, Full Trichord, Full Compass, Riveted Hammers, Handsome Walnut Case, Inlaid Marqueterie Panel, Sconces, Tresses, etc. Tone and touch perfect. Guaranteed 25 years. 25 guineas, at 10/6 per month. Delivered free on payment of 10/6. Approval. Catalogues Free.

ORGANS. GENUINE AMERICAN.

Imported Direct. Solid Walnut Case, Mirror Top, Music Case, 2 Knee Swells, Mouse and Dust Proof, 8 Stops, 3 sets of Reeds. 14 Guineas, at 6/- per month. 10 Stops, 3 sets of Reeds, 2 Octave Couplers. 15 guineas, at 7/- per month. Illustrated Lists Free. Kindly mention this paper.

THE LONDON AND LIVERPOOL PIANOFORTE CO., Granby St. & Selborne St., LIVERPOOL.

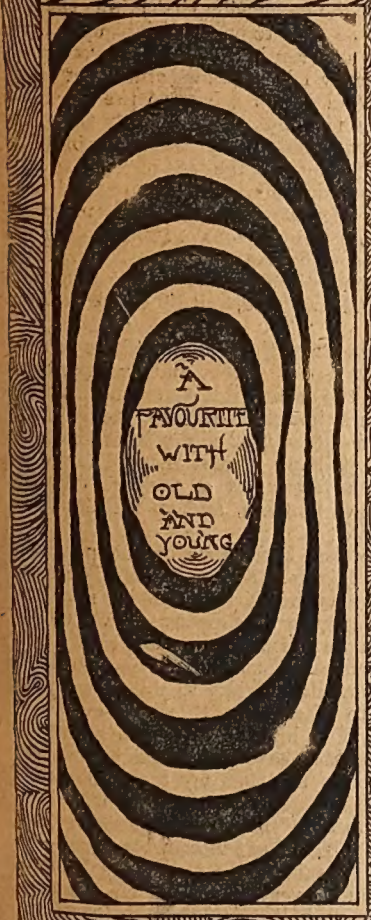
Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON

No. 499.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week ending July 23rd, 1898.



. . A . .

FOUR-LINKED CHAIN.

"GOOD evening. How are you?"

"Eh! I don't think—I mean I think you've made a mistake."

"You mean you don't know me? Well, do you think you would if I were to ask you for a light for this pipe I'm smoking while it was still in full blast?"

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing particular. Perhaps I've made a mistake; if so, I must apologise. I don't often forget faces, and I thought yours was familiar to me."

"Well, now you speak, I seem to think I've seen you before. Let me see, where was it?"

"Were you on Putney Bridge about this time one night last May. If you were, you asked me for a light."

"Oh, yes, of course, I remember now. Odd you should have remembered me; it's nearly twelve months ago."

"Oh, I rather pique myself on my memory for faces; besides, when a man asks you for a light, and knocks the ash off a cigar that is still burning, and proceeds to light it over again, you naturally look at him a bit curiously."

"You don't mean to say that my cigar was alight? I certainly thought it was out myself, or I shouldn't

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

have asked you for a match. However, that's nothing. What are you having?"

"Thanks; I'll take a whisky and small soda, I think."

"Good! Will your friend join us?"

"Thank you," replied the third of the three men who had thus dropped into conversation in the saloon bar of the Poplars Hotel, West Kensington. The meeting had been quite casual. The man who had spoken first had entered with his friend, and the man he had addressed was standing at the bar leaning on one elbow upon it, and chatting to the young lady who had just served him with a whisky and soda.

All three were well-dressed, gentlemanly-looking men, and the one who had been first spoken to was a peculiarly attractive looking man, at any rate, as far as first impressions went. He had one of those dark, strongly-marked, agreeable faces, which, at first glance, inspire confidence in the majority of men, and would be considered decidedly handsome by most women.

The man who had addressed him was of medium height, rather slender but well-built, and carried himself with a peculiar swing, which, taken in conjunction with his clean-shaven face and well-shaped mobile mouth, would have led anyone very quickly to the correct conclusion that he was an actor. The third man was a quietly-dressed and still more quietly-spoken individual, whose dark hair was somewhat dashed with grey, and whose carefully groomed moustache and side-whiskers gave him somewhat of a military appearance.

The only other occupant of the saloon-bar besides themselves, was a man sitting in a secluded corner with a glass of whisky and water in front of him, and apparently either tipsy or asleep.

The conversation thus casually commenced naturally turned on the faculty of remembering faces. Both the man at the bar and the actor seemed to pride themselves not a little on their powers in this direction, and by the time the third whisky and soda had been exchanged, they had each of them given one or two more or less remarkable instances of their exercise of it.

The man whom the actor had first spoken to, let fall the information that he was a barrister during the course of a story about a criminal case in which he had been engaged, and which had turned upon a remarkable recollection of a face seen once and identified again after five years.

"Yes," said the actor as he finished, "that was decidedly a curious case. It reminds me of a painful experience of my own a few years back, in which the recollection of a face played the principal part, only it was a girl's face, and a very pretty one, too. I'll call it 'A four-linked tragedy,' or 'A skeleton drama in four glimpses,' whichever you like."

"Ah, that sounds interesting," said the military-looking man. "Let us have it; we have half-an-hour to spare yet. I know you tell a story well."

"Well, there's not very much to tell," said the actor, nothing loth, "and not much scope for description. In fact, it's a mere matter of headings, though there's plenty of human interest in it."

He took a sip from his glass and went on:

"The first glimpse of the face I caught one night in the Strand three or four years ago now. I was playing in the second piece at the Globe, and I was hurrying along with my thoughts a long way from the pavement, when I almost collided with a lady who had got out of a brougham at the door of the Adelphi.

"I just pulled up in time, raised my hat, apologised and walked on. It was all over in a minute, but, brief as the glimpse had been, it was long enough to show me as pretty a face as a man need ever wish to look upon.

"It was one of those faces which you always want to turn round and look at again after you have passed; a face that you not only admire in the artistic way, but for emotional reasons as well. It was not merely pretty, too, there was sufficient character in it to stamp it upon one's memory, and distinguish it from the average pretty faces that you can see scores of in London at the beginning of the season.

"Well, she acknowledged my apology with a bow and just the faintest little flash of a smile, and I hurried on. So much for link number one.

"Of course I forgot all about the incident before the next morning, and thought no more of it until about thirteen months later, when I was playing in *The Silver King* at the Olympic. One night I noticed in the third row of the stalls a lady, whose face struck me as familiar. I was puzzled for a few minutes, and then the incident in the Strand came back. You know we mummers have trained memories, and have to be masters of the art of association.

"Well, I came to the conclusion that it was the same face, but what still seemed to cast a doubt upon it was the fact that it was apparently the face of a woman very much older. Presently I had an opportunity of taking a good look at it, and I was driven to the conclusion that it was the same face, but I was utterly shocked to see the difference that a single year had made in it.

"When I saw it first it was the face of a girl, who, to talk shop for a moment, had just come on, and found the performance a pleasant comedy. Now it was the face of a woman, who seemed to have found a good deal more tragedy than comedy in the drama of life. I have seldom seen off the stage such a perfect picture of stony wretchedness and half-resigned, half-rebellious suffering as it exhibited.

"Whatever the events of the year must have been she could have found little but misery and disappointment in them. However, the curtain fell on our mock tragedy in the usual way, and though I confess I thought not a little of the saddened face that night before I went to sleep, and though perhaps it may have haunted me for some time in a vague sort of fashion, still time went on and I forgot it again, and so the second link slipped out of sight.

"Two years after that I and four brother mummers took a week on the Thames, starting from Reading and pulling quietly down as the spirit moved us; sometimes camping out, and sometimes sleeping at a hotel, and altogether having a very comfortable time of it.

"We left Richmond about high-water one lovely moonlight night soon after twelve to pull over the last stage of our trip to Hammersmith, where we were to give the boat up. If it hadn't been such a very fine night we should probably have gone home by train, and in that case the odds are that my four-linked chain would never have had more than two links in it."

"What do you mean?" asked the barrister, with a sudden eagerness. "You don't mean to say you——"

"Saw her again?" said the actor. "Yes, I'm sorry to say I did, and under very miserable circumstances, too. We were about half-way between Barnes and Hammersmith, when our coxswain saw something floating in the water. We were ten or a dozen yards from it, and it was then so dusky on the water, as the moon had got rather low, that we took it for a floating

Digitized by Google

basket or a bundle of hay, and we should have passed it without taking further notice of it if the coxswain hadn't just then struck a match to light his pipe.

"He threw the match still burning into the water towards the object, and just as the lighted match fell with a hiss into the stream, our stroke brought us up all standing by exclaiming:

"'Good Heavens! That's not a basket; it's a human body!'

"In a very short time we were alongside of it; it was the body of a woman, dressed neatly but very simply—almost poorly, in fact. She was not drowned, or at any rate she had been stunned first, for we found a bruise behind one of the ears. Added to that there seemed to be sufficient air remaining in the lungs to keep the body from sinking, and this, I believe, would not have been the case in drowning, as the lungs would have filled with water in the struggle to breathe. We took the body in tow to Hammersmith, and a pretty mournful journey it was, I can tell you. We had to tow her because our boat was so light that we should certainly have had a capsize if we had tried to get her in.

"I suppose you know what I'm going to say now, and you're right. As soon as we had hailed a policeman at Hammersmith and got a light, I saw for the third time the face that I had seen in the Strand and in the theatre. That is how the third link passed through my hands."

"Of course, there was an inquest, which I and my friends had to attend. Who, or what she was, there was not a word of evidence to show. All that came to light about her was the bald fact that a waterman at Kew had let a boat the previous day to a man and woman, and that he thought this was the woman, but he could not be sure, as he had scarcely noticed her.

"The man had disappeared, and as the boat had been found the day after we picked up the body down below Vauxhall, bottom upwards, it was concluded that they had capsized and ——"

"Yes, of course," interrupted the barrister. "A case of double suicide, I suppose, covered up by a pretence at an accident. I've heard of several of them."

"So I suppose everybody would have thought if it had not been for the bruise behind the ear, and if the woman had really been drowned. The verdict, I admit, was simply the open one of 'Found drowned,' though some of the jury were for 'Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown,' as the formula runs. If I'd been on the jury I should certainly have stuck out for that verdict."

"Would you? I don't see it," replied the barrister. "The bruise behind the ear was not necessarily a proof of violence, and certainly not of murder; it might have been given in a dozen ways. As for the lungs having air in them—well, the woman might have fainted from sheer fright before she actually drowned. You say the man was never heard of again?"

"No; he vanished completely."

"Ah! Evidently, as I say, it was either an accident or double suicide, or the man may even have killed the woman and then have committed suicide himself. Anyhow, it seems to be a finished chapter, and so what becomes of your fourth link?"

"Oh! that has to be forged yet," said the actor. "I am still of opinion that the woman was murdered, but I admit that I have never had the slightest reason to suspect any living man of the crime until now."

As he spoke the actor fixed his eyes on those of the barrister, and looked at him with such unmistakable meaning that the man took a step backwards and exclaimed angrily:

"Confound you, sir, what do you mean? What are you looking at me like that for?"

"I mean, Mr. Alfred Ferris, Barrister-at-Law, Printer to the Bank of Engraving, and murderer to boot, that you have just helped me to forge my fourth link by admitting that you met me on Putney Bridge a year ago and asked me for a light.

"Stand still now and don't make a fuss, and I will soon satisfy you that the game is up. Don't think of violence, please. My friend here is a detective with a warrant for your arrest as a bank-note forger, and there are two policemen within hail outside."

A wave of pallor passed swiftly over the face of the man addressed as Ferris; but it vanished in a moment, and his old air of assurance came back. He laughed aloud, and not at all unnaturally.

"Rubbish, man, rubbish!" he said, almost jovially. "Your Thespian imagination has led you away this time, and you have made a mistake in faces for once, if you think I'm the man you name. You can arrest me for him, if you like, and I'm quite willing to go with you; but I warn you that the risk will be considerable in the way of damages, for I shall not have the slightest difficulty in proving who I am to-morrow. You'll find it just as hard to prove that I am a bank-note forger as to show that I murdered this woman you were talking about. That is to say, both are impossible tasks."

"Very well, I'll take the risk," replied the actor. "No, sergeant, not yet. I am going to play my tragedy out in my own way," he continued, putting his hand on the arm of the detective, who was making a move forward.

"Now, look here, when you asked me for a light you didn't want a light, because your cigar was not out. The request was a prearranged signal with a man that you mistook me for, and who is now in Wormwood Scrubbs. We've got the story from him, and I needn't tell you who he is. He was caught that very night with the plate on him which he was to have given to you.

"Now it was not in front of the Adelphi, as I told you, but in front of the Haymarket, that I saw the girl for the first time. I changed the names to keep you from suspecting, because you were with her. You were also with her on the second occasion, not in the stalls at the Olympic, but in the dress circle at the Globe, and I recognised you again.

"That man in the corner there is the man who let the boat to you, and he will recognise you as the man who took the girl on the water. You have confessed already that you met me on Putney Bridge a year ago, several months after the girl was drowned, and, therefore, you were not drowned with her. That, Mr. Ferris, is the link that was wanting, and which you have assisted us to forge in this little comedy, or perhaps I should say tragedy, which we have arranged here for your special benefit to-night. Saunders, come out here, please."

The man in the corner got up and came forward to the bar.

"Is this the man you let the boat to the day before the girl's body was found?"

"Well, he's a lot better dressed now than he was then, but that's him, and no mistake."

"Now, sergeant," said the actor, stepping aside, "my part's over. It is time for you to come on, and I'll go and give the supers their call."

GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Digitized by Google

Told in the Indian Bazaar.

By H. HUNTER.

BODLEIAN LIBRARY OXFORD

No. 6.—THE ROSE AND THE RING.

THERE was once in the country beyond Tamluk a king called Dhanapati. He was a mighty man of renown, rich in substance, great in power, and learned in the arts and mysteries; and many came to him seeking service and bringing gifts.

They came from the hills and from the plains, and from the island of Ceylon which lies far to the South. And Dhanapati listened to them all.

"Some day," said he, "mayhap I shall find amongst them an honest man—one who seeks me for my own good, and not for what he hopes to get for himself," for, notwithstanding all their fine talk and their gifts and their offerings, Dhanapati, who could read men's hearts by looking into their eyes, knew that each man's purpose was to learn, if he might discover it, the secret of Dhanapati's great wealth—the source of the inexhaustible treasure which gave him favour in the eyes of the Great God Jagganath over all the Princes of Hind; so that he alone of sovereign Lords was permitted to enter the holy place and stand before the high altar.

In the private garden of the Royal Palace, Dhanapati, by his magical arts, had found a well, which turned to gold everything that was put into it.

The well was guarded by a monster called Rahu, all head and shoulders, with a mouth like a tiger's and furnished with immense canine tusks. He was a servant of Asur the earth-demon, who knows where all the treasure is that is hidden in the dark places of the earth, and reveals the secret only to those who can pronounce the master-word which compels him.

Rahu would allow nobody but Dhanapati himself to approach the well; so, by order of the King, the people brought to Dhanapati all the vessels of brass which they could procure; and the King, having paid for them in good coin of the realm, put them straightway into the well, which in a few hours converted them into gold; and with the gold he built shrines and endowed temples. For all which, the high priest of Jagganath promised him the chief seat under Parigat—the undying tree of Paradise, the fragrance of whose flowers fills the heavens. He bestowed also upon him the office of sweeper before the god; of which title indeed Dhanapati was prouder than of his royal crown or his golden well.

Now, on a certain day, there came with the others to the Court of King Dhanapati, a poor mendicant without shoes to his feet and with only a ragged *dhótee* to cover his loins.

Yet of all who prostrated themselves before the Lord of Wealth—for by that name was Dhanapati known far and near by the people who served other lords—the shoeless mendicant was the only one who asked nothing.

When the King, addressing him, inquired whence he came, what news he brought, and what was the subject of his petition, the mendicant, before answering, stooped and, from the naked ground at his feet, plucked a wax-white rose, which he presented to the King, saying:

"'Tis Indra's flower, my lord, and but even now was growing in the meads of Heaven.

"A fool esteemeth a gift according to the gold which has purchased it. A wise man looketh to the craft which has produced it. But a just man considers neither the gold nor the craft, but values the gift only for the sake of the giver.

"Of gold, O King! you have no lack. Use it for the service of man, and Heaven will reward thee. Of craft, the best may be bought in the market for hire. But a rose from Paradise, no money can buy or craft can fashion.

"Remember then, O King! to cherish the white rose of Indra. Whence I come, matters not, nor whither I go; and suit I have none to make.

"But my lord asks for news; and what news, think you, is a poor wayfarer like to bear that will command attention from a king? Nevertheless, such as I have I will retail; and so be, the King will know if the beggar's speech concerns the 'King's crown.'

"In the kingdom of Kalinga then, through which I passed on my way hither, I chanced to see Rahini, the Lotus-eyed daughter of Srimanta, the great Emperor of the Lunar Race. Fair and good is she to look upon. None fairer, O King! have these eyes beheld in all the regions that lie west of the Sun and east of the Moon. But the Emperor, her father, keeps the maiden close in his *Zenana*, swearing that he will give her only to one who will acknowledge his god—Ganesha—as Lord of lords and Lord of All. That, for sure, is all the news I have to tell—yet, mayhap, it is not told without purpose, neither was the white flower offered without intent. But it is for thee, O King! to determine if aught I have said concerns thee."

Now, as Dhanapati listened, his vanity was piqued,

Digitized by Google

his curiosity excited, and all the ambition in his nature aroused. He would fain have questioned the mendicant further.

This man, thought he, is surely the honest fellow I have been looking for; and a messenger from Indra to boot. He has sought me out for no profit to himself, but that he might give me the message from his lord. To how many now, of the followers of Indra hath he given it—or has it been told to my ears alone?

Closing his eyes while he pondered the matter, Dhanapati opened them to find the mendicant departed, and none could say how, or whither he went. He was gone, but no eye had seen him leave.

The White Rose was still in the King's hand, filling the air with fragrance, or His Majesty would have said: "Lo I have dreamed a dream in the daytime and seen a vision as in the night."

So the King took the White Rose and laid it on the altar before Jagganath, and shut himself up in his chamber to consider who the mendicant might be, and all he had told him concerning Rahini, the Lotus-eyed.

Now it happened about this time that Dhanapati was sore vexed and displeased because of Seetani, his favourite wife. She was jealous of Vavaishni, her lord's latest addition to his *Zenana*; and things were all awry in the women's apartments.

Though he was the possessor of the Golden Well and enjoyed the distinction of being the sweeper before Jagganath, Dhanapati's domestic troubles made him level with the lowest.

Thinking over what he had heard from the beggar-man, King Dhanapati determined that Indra desired him to ask Rahini in marriage from the great Emperor of the Lunar Race.

So he collected presents of silver and presents of gold, rare stuffs and rich shaws, diamonds of the first water and pearls of great price; and dispatched them with a large embassy to solicit the Emperor's daughter to wife. He offered to place her at the head of his establishment, giving her precedence over all the ladies of the harem and providing for her a handsome suite of apartments in a new wing. But Srimanta, the Emperor, laughed him to scorn.

Rahu would allow nobody but Dhanapati himself to approach the well.

"What!" said he, "give my daughter to a scavenger—a road sweeper? Tell your master that if he wants my daughter, he must come and take her."

So the ambassadors returned bringing the King's presents with them.

Then Dhanapati rent his royal robes and swore that he would never resume them till he had made the Elephant-worshipping Emperor acknowledge that the sweeper before Jagganath was worthy to mate with any daughter of earth he chose to ask for.

Calling for his fighting gear, he mounted his war-horse, and, putting himself at the head of his army, rode away to avenge the insult to himself and his god.

But in the middle of the battle, panic seized upon his men, and they broke and fled in all directions, leaving the Royal Standard and many prisoners in the hands of the Elephant worshipper.

Overwhelmed with dismay, Dhanapati rode back to his capital as fast as a fleet horse could carry him, and throwing himself at the feet of his god, upbraided him with desertion in the hour of danger.

"O King," said a voice which Dhanapati at once knew to be that of the beggar-man, "O King, hear and live. Said I not to thee, 'Cherish the White Rose of Indra?' But, alas! my lord, thou hast surely forgotten it," and at the same moment the King, turning, saw the honest mendicant at his side.

Then Dhanapati remembered that in his haste to avenge himself on Srimanta he had forgotten to tend the white flower before starting, and behold it was faded and withered.

But the beggar-man spake words of comfort to the King, and bade him lead yet another army to the field, and a sure sign would be given him.

"Watch carefully," said he, "for the sign of the God Indra, and mayhap ye will see also the sign of Kama. Then tarry not, nor look back, but strike hard and strike home, for Mahadeva himself will be with you. Remember my words, for if ye ignore them defeat shall surely come upon ye."

So Dhanapati went forth again, and each morning and evening the men looked east and west, and north and south, for the sign, and when they saw none, their hearts sank within them and they were afraid. But Dhanapati rode ever at their head and encouraged them by look and word, saying:

"Fear not, my children; O servants of Maheswara, ye have the promise of the Great One. The White Rose will bloom for us in the desert; and the seas be swelled by the tears of the queens whom the conquests of Jagganath shall widow."

One evening, when heartsick and footsore, having marched for fifty days and being near to the army of the Elephant Emperor, the men were preparing their food at the door of the tents and silence was over all the camp, suddenly there appeared before the King's tent a maiden, holding in one hand a ring and in the other a rose.

The ring was of purest gold from the mountain of Meru, and fashioned by the jinns who live in the caves under the mountain. The rose was white as the marble in the quarries of Aryavatta, which is only used for the tombs of kings and emperors. Both rose and ring possessed magical virtues which time and occasion would disclose.

When King Dhanapati, running out to ascertain the cause of the commotion, beheld the visitor at the door, he would have bowed himself to the ground; but the damsel addressing him said:

"Nay, O King! for I am but a servant of my lord, even as thou. This Rose of Indra is sent thee by the Great God Jagganath, before whom the Elephant Worshipper Srimanta shall humble himself; and this ring is the gift of his good brother. Two horsemen who were riding south, one on a black steed, the other on a white, gave them to me for thee, saying: 'Thy time was come, thy duty plain, thy path straight; as he understands so will it be.'"

Then the maiden, having delivered her message, disappeared as suddenly as she came, and Dhanapati knew that the Great One himself had sent the sign which the beggar-man had promised.

At the battle, next day, Dhanapati drove the soldiers of the Emperor before him, as the wind drives the leaves along the alleys of the jungle; and chasing them to the walls, he laid siege to the city and carried off the Princess captive.

But for all this, Srimanta refused to take back the words he had cast in the teeth of the King, and calling upon Ganesha and his mother to prevent the insulting marriage, he rushed upon Dhanapati single-handed, thinking to slay him; but an asp flew out of the White Rose which Dhanapati was wearing, and bit him in the lip that he died. Then Dhanapati went home, taking the Princess with him, and no man durst ask him anything, for he was wroth in his heart; and, refusing even to look at Rahini, he swore that she should be married to a Bhungee, the elephant-headed god, and live as a slave. So he commanded his minister to wed her to the sweeper of the stables at the royal mews.

Now when the soldiers who had fought for Dhanapati heard what the King had decreed, they forgot their wounds in remembering the maiden's beauty, of which none had ever seen the like in all the countries through which they had travelled.

"Surely," said they "our lord does foolishly. Purity, goodness and beauty are jewels which should adorn a king's diadem. It is an insult to Heaven to give the damsel to a sweeper."

But Mahdoo, the old minister, seeing what a pet the King was in, said never a word, only he took the Princess to his own palace and gave her in charge of the ladies of his household.

Meanwhile King Dhanapati placed the Rose and the Ring on the altar before Jagganath, and went off to the Golden Well. He wanted some things he had left there, before starting to chastise the insolence of the Emperor.

But when he got them out, behold! they were every one and every whit as brassy as when he put them in. So he put them back and went again in a week's time; but finding them still in their original condition, without sign or symptom of gold about a single one; he began to get uneasy and asked Rahu who had been to the well. "No one," said Rahu, "but an old beggar-man who came yesterday and asked for water, and when I bade him begone, threw a handful of garden mould down the well. I would have chased him out of the garden, but when I went to look for him, he had vanished."

Then King Dhanapati went to the temple, secretly hoping that there he might meet the poor medicant; but though the King waited long the beggar came not; while the Rose on the altar faded, day by day, though tended never so carefully by the anxious monarch; and the Ring lost its brilliancy and grew dull like lead.

And all this time Mahdoo the minister spake not a word of the Princess, while Dhanapati, believing it had been done as he ordered, was afraid to venture a question.

At last the time of the Holy Festival came round, and the people were assembled in thousands and tens of thousands to see the image of the great god brought forth.

And the King, taking the sweeper's broom in his hand, walked before the car and humbly swept the dust off the road in front of the god, while the people shouted in praise of the King and in honour of the Image.

Then Mahdoo, the aged minister, brought out the maiden Rahini, attired as a bride for the bridal, and placing her side by side with the King in the face of all the people, spake and said:

"Take, O, my King, the bride whom the good lord Jagganath has sent thee. My lord swore in his wrath that I should marry the maiden to a sweeper of the street, and behold, my lord, I give her to thee."

Now when Dhanapati heard these words his heart leapt within him, and when he looked at Rahini and saw that she was beautiful as the morning and fairer than the stars, he was ready to fall upon the neck of Mahdoo to find how very wisely his ancient minister had acted. In his heart the King knew that he had behaved very badly to the Princess, who surely ought not to suffer for her father's fault; moreover he had failed in his duty to the god whose servant he professed to be, and only the wisdom of Mahdoo had prevented him from filling up the measure by committing an offence against High Heaven itself.*

The Golden Well had stopped, the White Rose had turned brown, the Ring had lost its lustre and the mendicant came no more—it needed no magic to explain the matter. So Dhanapati took the maiden by the hand before all the people, and commanded that the wedding should proceed.

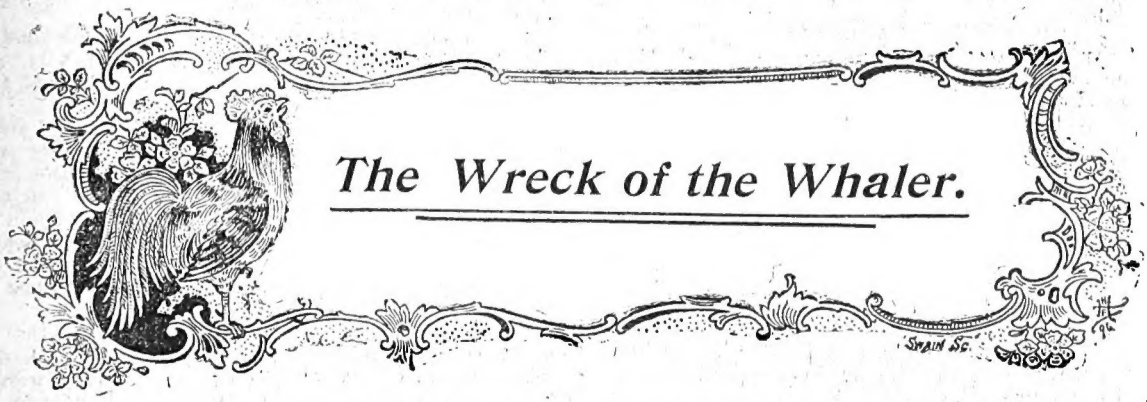
Then from the crowd there arose a cry: "Room for the holy man, room!" and the mendicant made his way to the King.

"Send, my lord," said he, "for the Ring and the Rose, and go thyself to the well, and what thou findest there let it be for a marriage portion for Rahini the lotus-eyed."

So Rahini was wedded with Kama's Ring, which fitted her delicate finger exactly, and shone there with a brightness which dazzled the beholders, almost as much as the beauty of Dhanapati's new bride. And lo! the White Rose was found to have put forth fresh blossoms and was become a bouquet fit for an empress—every flower without fleck or flaw, perfect in form and pure in colour; and their fragrance reached to the uttermost edge of the vast crowd.

Only the mendicant was seen no more. But when the King went to the well he found there far more than he had ever put into it. It took him a week to get all the things out—that handful of mould which the beggar-man had thrown in must have developed magical properties—and when he had got them, he gave them all to Rahini as the holy man directed; and he and she lived in the light of each other's countenance till Indra summoned them both to a seat in Paradise under the shade of Parigat.

* By marrying the Princess to a sweeper, she would have lost caste and thereby imperilled her salvation.



When Captain Dawson came back to Aberdeen in the winter of 1879, the strongest desire of his life was to find out what had become of his ship, the *Polly Ann*, which had run away from him in the North Atlantic somewhere about lat. 55, long. 53, a year and a half previously, having two people on board at the time of its disappearance.

Almost the first thing he did was to seek the assistance of Mr. Kimber, solicitor, by whose advice he had the following advertisement put into half a score of the most likely home and foreign newspapers:

£100 REWARD

For information as to the fate of the whaling brig *Polly Ann*, which sailed from Aberdeen May 16th, 1877.—Address Henry Kimber, Solicitor, Aberdeen, Scotland.

A little more than seven months had passed since the publication of this appeal, when one day a short, thick-set, smoothly-shaved, solemn-faced, swarthy man of perhaps thirty-two years of age, dressed in landsman's clothes, but with a sea sway to his body, appeared in Kimber's office.

"Your most obedient," he remarked, with a bow and a backward scrape of the foot, as he turned his hat, like a wheel, in his hands; "I'm from Melbourne—arrived last week, and have come about the *Polly Ann* reward."

Mr. Kimber was professionally glad to see him, and, stirred by an unprofessional curiosity in the ocean mystery, gave him hearty greeting.

"My name's Jack Wootton," said the newcomer, as he slowly seated himself, "and I was the cook on the ship until she ran away with me."

He was going to say more, when a framed portrait of a judge caught his eye. He abruptly left his seat and stood before it in an attitude of meditation.

"Barring wig and nightgown, that would be very like Captain Dawson, eh?" he said, after two or three minutes' thought.

"Quite right," assented the lawyer. "It had never occurred to me before. By the way, it looks as though that hundred pounds would be easily earned."

The man turned his gaze from the picture to Mr. Kimber, and back again.

"Is the cap'n alive?" he asked, paying no attention to the solicitor's remark.

"Oh, yes; I'll send him word that you've turned up."

"I think you'd better not," suggested the sailor, coming close to the other. "I'm sure he'll not want to see me—me above all other men just now."

"Nonsense!" said Kimber. "He's anxious to know what became of his ship."

"But not of the persons left on her, I know. I think he'd rather see anyone but see me. But what's the course to be headed, Mr. Lawyer?"

"You'll have to make your statement, Wootton. My clerk will take it down——"

"Umph! I thought so. No use; I can't talk before a clerk and know he was writing it all down, and so I wrote it out myself, ship-shape, just as if I was talking it."

He pulled a roll of paper from his pocket, and placed it upon the table. "It is true!" holding up his right hand as if taking oath to the document.

"I'll read it over, and you may call in the morning and swear to it. Then we'll begin to look into the matter and——"

"O-h! So we're just going to begin the matter. Is that it?"

Mr. Kimber nodded and smiled his answer.

"Storm's a-coming if that's the heading," said the sailor, putting on his hat with a strong downward pull, as if it were really "blowing great guns" outside. "You may look for me in the morning, then. My compliments to Cap'n Dawson, if he'll listen. But he won't. Good-day."

So great was Mr. Kimber's curiosity in the matter that the door had not fairly closed upon his visitor before he began the reading of the statement.

WOOTTON'S NARRATIVE.

"I've seen a notice in a paper that somebody was wanted who could tell what became of the whaler *Polly Ann*. I can and I'm going to from now on.

"I used to be a country schoolmaster, but when my young wife died I lost rudder, compass-bearings, everything. 'The only thing that will save you, my man,' said the doctor, 'is a long sea voyage!' That is how I came to go to sea.

"I went as cook because I was not a foremast hand, though I had once been to Rio as cabin boy. But I could cook, and that is how the *Polly Ann* had a berth for me.

"We sailed the middle of May, 1877. Two months later we were well up towards Baffin Bay, with over one hundred barrels of oil under the hatches, and not a man hurt or a spar cracked.

"The *Polly Ann* was a good one—368 tons, square rigged fore and aft, three years old, and provisioned for a two years' voyage. Captain Dawson was a long, lean, sanctimonious chap of fifty, who ought to have been a preacher, by his looks and talk when he wasn't angry. The men, eight all told, were as good as the average, excepting Maitland, the carpenter. I'll be coming to him after awhile.

"It was a beautiful afternoon in July when the ship's good luck left her. The weather was cold, though the sun had been shining up to noon, when a grey film crept up far away in the north-west, and the sea was dead calm.

"About three o'clock a whale rose about a mile away. The captain looked aloft, and then along the horizon. Nothing was set except the fore-topsail and flying jib, for we had been cleaning up from a catch of two days before.

"'I don't particularly like that sky,' he said to the mate, as he looked to the north'ard, 'but I'll chance it.'

"With that, he took to the boat in pursuit of the fish, with every man save the carpenter and myself, and rowed away like mad, over water smooth as oil. There didn't seem any risk in all this, so far as I could judge. An hour, at the longest, ought to bring the boat back, and no storm seemed likely at the time.

"Maitland minded the wheel, and I stood at the heel of the bowsprit when the fish was struck. It started straight for the ship, but when within half a mile, swerved to the northeast, and then, after a bit, ran south. It was now astern of the ship instead of ahead. I had gone from the bow, moving as the fish changed its course, and was leaning on the taffrail watching.

"Suddenly I felt a puff of ice-cold air on my cheek. At the same moment Maitland cried out, 'A gale's coming,' and gave the wheel a spin. Forward, about where the whale was struck, was a great grey wall let down from the clouds above, squeezing the air toward us.

"A glance astern showed that the whale had been abandoned, and that the men in the boat were rowing for their lives to reach the ship. Which would get to it first—the boat or the fog? The question was speedily decided, for in less than three minutes we were shivering in the icy mist, and the sea was hidden.

"The *Polly Ann* bobbed up and down like a cork: the masts groaned from peak to keel, and the yards seemed as if they were being tugged at by giants. The air was bitterly cold; a fine snow, as if shaken through a sieve, came over everything, and from stem to stern there fell a dull, grey twilight.

"Far away seemed the cries of the men in the boat as the storm hesitated before striking us. I don't believe they were six hundred feet distant when the roar of the tempest deafened us.

"The waters went into a passion, and pounded away at our starboard bow until the nose of the brig was battered from the course we had been holding, and with topsail and jib swollen with the breath of the storm, the ship shot away like an arrow into the froth and scum of waves and clouds, leaving the captain and his boat's crew to perish. I saw it was all up with them so far as we were concerned, and that if any life-saving were to be done, it must be for our own account.

"Our condition was a hopeless one, for all that I could see. The little brig went tearing through the great waves, her two sails frozen taut as drum heads, her yards touching the sea as she rolled. It seemed as if no race horse could travel as fast as the *Polly Ann* was going on that dismal track.

"'I'm afraid it's all up with us,' said Maitland, as after a dozen attempts I lighted the binnacle lamp. 'I'm nearly done for, as it is. I can't hold on much longer.'

"I saw that it was true, for every lurch and plunge of the ship lifted him off his feet, and loosened his hold on the wheel. My heart was full of pity for the poor fellow, and so I told him to go below and rest if he could. He was utterly useless in that condition, and would be better and safer out of the way.

"And here I want to have my say about this man as I knew him, or supposed I knew him, at that time. He was a passably good-looking, red-headed young fellow, of ordinary height, with a fair complexion and a smooth face. His features were delicate and regular, but the charm of his face lay in his great blue eyes. No matter how you felt towards him, if he turned those sad-looking eyes on you, you became weak at once, they were so mild and pleading. He must have been twenty-two or twenty-three years old, and so slight and delicate that I wondered what drove him to sea life, and especially to that of a whaling

Digitized by Google

ship. He wasn't much of a carpenter. He made pretences of hammering and sawing, but was that slow and unskilful that somebody—many a time the captain—had to turn in and do the work.

"The crew would have nothing to do with him when they could avoid it. They disliked him for his weak, whining voice, for one thing, and more than all because the captain coddled him on the ground that he was sickly, going so far as to give him a berth in his cabin, where he stayed most of the time, reading and sleeping.

"Once in a while Maitland would help me in the galley, and from what he did and the way he did it I knew he was better than I at cooking. The captain used to talk with him a great deal, but the men, as I have said, would have nothing to do with him. In short—for I could tell many a story of his queer ways and doings—this was the bundle of uselessness left on my hands by the breaking of the storm, a human life that I felt I must save equally with my own.

"After Maitland had given me the wheel, I looked at the compass. We were flying to the south; before the gale we were heading north. I knew absolutely nothing about navigation, unless it be knowledge to take my turn at the wheel; Maitland could do that, too. Between us we might be able to hold the ship before the wind.

"Where we would bring up in the end we didn't know. When I looked about me it seemed as if we might bring up any second. One minute we were up in the air, the wind yelling like mad women through the ropes and spars; then down we slid, as if going to the bottom, until the roar of the storm seemed miles above us. Nothing was to be seen; the ship was ploughing through a whirling bank of snow. Nothing could be done except to hold on to the wheel and keep her before the wind.

"I can't tell the horrible loneliness of that night, in which I seemed to be the only human being on the face of the earth, with death jogging me at the elbows. I would fall into a doze only to be knocked out of it by a rap on my half-frozen knuckles from the wheel as the bow would begin to swing into the wind. Out of a stupor so heavy that it might have been the beginning of death, I was aroused by being pounded on the back.

"Morning had come, and Maitland, bundled up in the captain's great oilskins, was standing at my side. The wind and the snow still lashed the ship, and thundered through the rigging. I could not see a hundred feet away.

"'I've not closed my eyes since I left you,' he shrieked in my ear. 'Oh, this is terrible! Give me the spokes. I'd rather relieve you than be alone,' and he pushed away my numbed hands.

"'Then I'll go below for a bit of sleep,' I said.

"'No! no! don't! Jack, stay by me! I'm afraid.'

"'But, man, I must sleep or go mad!'

"'Then sleep here, at my feet, where I can see and touch you. There's room enough. Something dreadful will happen if you leave me. I know there will.'

"He was terribly in earnest, so I agreed, and crawled down into the cabin for blankets and more clothing, if the captain had left any. I knew he had a bottle of brandy, and rummaged until I found it hidden in a locker. Down went a full glass of the stuff. Then I gathered an armful of bedclothing and put on an old great coat that had been part of the bedding in his bunk.

Every Lady should Read
"M. A. P."
THE NEW SOCIETY PAPER.
Edited by T. P. O'CONNOR.
Every Thursday.
PRICE
ONE PENNY.

"'One more swig at the bottle,' thought I, and I sat down to drink it. No sooner done than my head went over on the table, and I slept like one dead, leaving the poor lad alone on the deck in the storm. I couldn't help it, and yet I shall never forgive myself for it, for it was as cruel a deed as one man could do to another.

"As he told me later on, his fear and loneliness for hour after hour drove him mad for a time. I believe he never got over it, for often afterwards, in his sleep, he would cry out: 'Jack, Jack Wootton, come! for Heaven's sake, come! I'm afraid!' And I never heard him thus without the tears coming to my eyes.

"Well, as I've said, I went instantly to sleep, used up. The next I heard was a noise like the firing at once of half-a-dozen great cannon, and instantly I lay on my back on the floor, in the midst of a lot of glass from what I knew was the smashed-in skylight.

"Had the vessel blown up? On second thought I knew that was impossible, as she carried nothing that would cause an explosion. It must have been a minute before I realised that the *Polly Ann* was not in motion, save a rocking one from side to side; that there was no sign of a storm, but, instead, a solemn and unnatural stillness.

"Getting my senses together I ran up on deck, coming out from the companion-way upon a scene of destruction, dimly visible under an opal-coloured light, unlike anything which I ever saw. The air was cold and clammy; the skin felt it; the nose breathed it. What I saw made me turn giddy for a second.

"Both masts had gone down within twenty feet of the deck. The spars and top masts lay athwartship after smashing in the bulwarks where they fell. The heel of the bowsprit had been driven back to, and ripped up the cook's galley. Stays, shrouds, all sorts of top hamper was spread like a great net over the deck, pegged down, as it were, by huge pieces of ice from stem to stern. No sky was to be seen, and the only proof of a sea was the swashing of water alongside, and a sound as of distant, muffled thunder.

"Maitland was not in sight. I called without getting a reply.

Digitized by Google

"Climbing over the wreckage, I found the poor lad senseless beside the wheel, one hand upon it. He had fallen at his post of duty. Clumsy as he was in his clothing, I carried him down to the cabin, forced down his throat some of the captain's brandy, piled on his body all the bedding I could find, and then returned on deck, anxious to discover what had happened.

"All the light there was came through a wall of jagged ice on the port side, that rose with an inward curving to a height of at least a hundred feet.

"There was solid ice on the other side and at the bow, and ice above, some of it hanging from the top in pendants as big round as a ship's mast. Astern had been an opening a little wider than the ship, and perhaps forty feet high, through which the *Polly Ann* had entered this cathedral of the sea, but the shock of the striking hulk had brought down huge columns of ice, and they lay across this opening, piled up so that but a slit of the sky could be seen through a high-up crevice.

"Putting this and that together, and seeing the lifted-up bow and the sunken stern, I realised that we had sailed with terrific speed into the cavern of a huge iceberg, and were prisoners.

"When I had the facts of this extraordinary situation thoroughly in my head, I was in the depths of despair even while I was full of hope. There seemed no possibility of escape, for even should we be freed from this prison, there was no getting away from the berg, the boats being smashed or lost. We had provisions enough to last two men five years; there was fuel enough, with the oil and the hull of the ship, to last perhaps the same time. After that we could freeze and starve, if we had not died in any other way.

"To think of five years of under-ice existence scared me to my marrow; and yet hope kept saying, 'Something will turn up. Look alive now!'

"I went back to Maitland. He was warm and in a sound sleep. Seeing this, I went on deck again and began to plan. When my mate woke up, hours afterwards, he was in fair condition.

"'Have I talked in my sleep?' was the first question he asked. When I shook my head in answer he simply said, 'I'm glad of that,' and turned his back on me.

"I wondered for a second why he should be curious; then I forgot all about it.

"As soon as he felt strong enough to get about we began to get the wreck into some sort of neatness. Two weeks passed before we had the deck clear, and the ropes and wood cut into shape for fuel. Then came what I had dreaded—days without work.

"Maitland became silent and moped in the cabin; he had plenty of food, but he grew thin, had an unnatural brightness in his eyes, and a short, hacking cough grew upon him. I used to rouse him by getting him to run races on deck, to throw a harpoon at a mark, and sticks at the great icicles; sometimes we would climb up into the caves which ran everywhere into the huge, floating mountain.

"Out of bits of waste paper I made a pack of cards, with which we played hour after hour. I did everything possible to cheer up the poor lad; yet my work seemed useless; he grew weaker and weaker, and his great, sad eyes were seldom dry of tears.

"Weeks passed, as I knew by checking off the daylight, all the time the berg was slowly drifting, as we could tell by the little whirlpools and eddies round the *Polly Ann*. More light appeared to be filtered through the wall of ice on the port side; every day new rivulets trickled down its rough sides; more water flowed through the old channels, and day and night the tumbling down of pieces of the mountain roared in our ears like thunder.

"One day there came a moaning and a wailing—far away, then near, then far away again—lasting for hours. It was the fog-bell and the whistle of a steamship, sure signs of a warm latitude. Maitland heard it, and coming to me, put an arm on my shoulder, and looking at me through his tears, said:

"'Jack, there's the old cries of human life. I shall never see that life again. You may not think so, but it once was very dear to me; it is now, and I should like to live.'

"With that he leant forward and kissed me on the cheek. Then he buried his face in his hands and cried like a child.

"'Hush, lad! Don't take on like that! You'll hear the birds and see the trees and fields again, never fear. Cheer up, mate!'

"'When I die, Jack—as I shall soon—promise not to throw me overboard, but bury me somewhere on the ship. You'll not be afraid of my body, will you?'

"I promised, and when I had spoken, the poor boy tottered away and down into the cabin, catching hold of things to steady himself as he went.

"An hour later I followed him. He was in the captain's berth, buried under a pile of clothes, as if cold. He did not answer when I spoke, and when I pulled away the covering from his face there was blood on his lips and under his cheek a cloth wet with blood.

"He turned his head and smiled up at me with such a look as I've never seen on a human face.

"'It's not the first, but it's the last, I think,' he whispered, touching the red-stained cloth. 'Oh, I'm so cold, Jack! Call mother! M-o-t-h-e-r! Tell the captain I forgive him. Ah, if the good Lord will only pardon me! Bring the lamp nearer, Jack, I'm freezing.'

"I put the light closer, and, scared at seeing the poor fellow all shivering, I ran at the top of my speed up to the galley, where there was always warm water in the copper, stirred up the fire, and when the water grew hot, dipped into it a rag, and with it steaming in my hands hurried back to poor Maitland.

"He lay just as I had left him, face upwards, but with a waxen whiteness in it and a pinched look that made him seem a stranger. He opened his eyes, and a faint smile came upon his mouth as he saw me again. As I caught hold of the covering on his chest to throw it back, that I might lay on the hot cloth, he tried to push away my hands.

"'Not now,' he whispered. 'Oh, not now, when I'm dying.'

"I did not understand. How could I? With rough, coarse fingers I tore at the buttons of the woollen shirt and threw it open. One look told a sad story, and I softly pulled back the garment over the snow-white breast of a woman!

"I glanced at her face. She was staring at me with wide-open eyes—dead!

"What I might have done when I made these two discoveries, had not another misfortune come upon me at the same instant, would be hard to say. As I straightened back from bending over the figure in the berth, I saw that the cabin was glowing with a red light, so strong that even the face of the dead girl took from it a faint, rosy hue. I was on deck in half a minute, only to see what nearly drove me mad. The *Polly Ann* was one great fire amidships, the oil-soaked planks of the deck making a pavement for flames that

Digitized by Google

leapt half way to the roof of the cavern. In my haste to warm the water and get back to my dying mate I must have scattered some of the live coals, and here was the result!

"The heat was unbearable, the smoke stifling. Water was flowing in torrents down the sides of the ice, and turning to steam as it came near the hull. Every breath was harder to draw, and foot by foot, like a red wind, came the fire.

"My promise to the dead girl to bury her in the ship was as good as kept, for her body would go with the hull, as mine was likely to go.

"From afar came a long, booming note. The iceberg shook deep under the sea, and the crash of falling weights on the roof and starboard wall followed. There was no time for thinking over the cause. The heat was as stifling as if I were inside a huge oven with the fires going under it.

"Catching up a piece of rope I jumped overboard, and swimming to the stern, lashed myself to the rudder post, holding my head under water as often and as long as possible, preferring to boil rather than roast to death.

"The end was not long in coming. A mighty puff of air, a pushing of my head under the sea, a quaking of the hulk, a parting of the waters beneath, a crash like falling walls, showed that the heated air in the chamber had blown out the partition between prison and liberty, between darkness and sunshine.

"Out of the door thus flung open rolled a cloud of jet-black smoke. With the inletting of fresh air, the flames took fiercer grip on the poor little *Polly Ann*, raced along the water's edge, dived into the hold and cabin, and swished like vultures round under the stern to catch me by the head.

"Not a half mile distant lay a man-of-war, her sails back, her rigging black with men watching an iceberg spout fire and smoke. Evidently I had been seen, for a boat was dropped from its davits, the dip and flicker of its oars began, and a white foam curled away from its bow, pointed to where I lay.

"Then I fell back in a dead faint. When I came to my senses I was on board the French frigate *L'Espérance*. From its deck, through a glass, I saw the brave little *Polly Ann* turn in her cradle, and sink out of sight in clouds of steam and smoke.

"If anything more than this is known about the brig it can only be by the spirit of the dead woman, whose body went down with the ship.

"To all of which I'm ready to make my affidavit.—

"JOHN WOOTTON."

The next morning found Captain Dawson at Mr. Kimber's office, but no John Wootton appeared then, or at any time thereafter. It was not at all necessary, as both had met the day before. But what took place at that meeting is not a matter of history.

ARTHUR GRAVES.

LOOK OUT FOR THE
DOUBLE SUMMER NUMBER
OF
"PEARSON'S WEEKLY."
It will consist of 32 pages, crammed with Splendid Articles, Stories, and Jokes.

Google

THE GLADIATOR.

A Tale of the Eastern Empire.

By GEORGE C. WALLIS.

SUMMARY.

The opposing factions in the public games of ancient Constantinople were known as the "Blues and Greens." The Emperor and Empress favoured the Blues, and consequently the enmity that existed between the two factions was so strong that they could not meet in the streets without coming to blows.

Rhesus, a country youth from Sicily, lands at Constantinople with his friend, Proclus, and with a fixed determination to become famous as a gladiator. He adopts the cause of the Greens, and the first contest in which he takes part is a chariot race, which he would have won had it not been for the foul play of Hermiot, his opponent of the Blues.

Rhesus falls in love with Eutasia, a pretty little waif of the circus, of twelve years, who speedily becomes warmly attached to him.

A few years pass and Eutasia is affianced to Rhesus.

One night Proclus and Rhesus chance to overhear a plot between Hypatius, a claimant to the throne, Marcen, a gladiator of the green faction, and Hermiot of the Blues, to raise the city in revolt, remove Justinian from the throne, and make Hypatius emperor in his place.

Hypatius proceeds to take them singly down to the flooded catacombs under the ground upon which they are standing, where he has vast treasures stored with which he purposes to buy the sympathies of the people. Marcen goes with him first, leaving Hermiot on the watch. Rhesus and Proclus spring out upon Hermiot, bind and gag him. Upon the return of Hypatius and Marcen, Proclus assumes the blue sash of Hermiot, personates Hermiot under the cover of the darkness, and goes down into the catacombs with Hypatius in order to discover the whereabouts of the treasure.

Meanwhile it occurs to Marcen that if he were to cut off the only means of egress from the catacombs, his fellow conspirators will be heard of no more, and he will be the sole possessor of the hidden treasure. He returns to the entrance of the catacombs, followed by Rhesus, who watches him carry out his murderous designs. Marcen discovers the presence of Rhesus and rushes at him. Rhesus eludes him, and a hot chase follows. Rhesus finally gives Marcen the slip, and, together with Pelak, a charioteer of the Greens, returns to the catacombs in order to release his friend Proclus. Upon arriving there, however, they find someone has been before them, and the place is empty.

Rhesus returns home, and is overjoyed to find Proclus awaiting him there. Proclus tells him how that Marcen himself released the prisoners from the catacombs, and how that whilst imprisoned there he, Proclus, had discovered an inscription revealing the hiding-place of the key of a secret door.

Marcen persuades the Empress to take Eutasia into her service, and thus to remove her from the influence of Rhesus. Rhesus hears of it too late to prevent her going to the palace. He pays a clandestine visit to Eutasia in the palace grounds in order to persuade her to fly with him. He is discovered by some spies in the pay of Marcen, and barely escapes with his life.

PART THE SECOND.

"In the Toils of Treachery."

CHAPTER III.

"Nika!"

The day of the games dawned rosy and clear, and from the earliest hour the hum of preparation and excitement hung over the city. Chariots and horsemen dashed hither and thither; the flags and favours of the factions bedecked the houses and palaces, and gates, and churches, and shrines, with masses of mingled blue and green; the gay ladies and lords of the Court rode abroad even in their luxurious cars, making bets on the coming events; the gladiators thronged the arena and practised their several turns for the last time; and the artisans and tradespeople, between their drinks at the crowded inns and their endless discussions on the points of the Christian doctrine, could talk of nothing but the games. The city was in a ferment—the ferment of a feverish suspense, of a dim foreknowledge of the days of death so near at hand—and the very slaves went about the streets without fear at the groups of savage-visaged Sythians, who, forgetting their hostility for the day, poured in at the Charsian gate.

As Rhesus and his friend threaded their way towards the busy quarter to which all the crowds tended, Proclus exchanging sundry greetings on the way in his most cynical vein, the thought of what might happen if disorder suddenly broke out and spread, seized our hero, appalling and oppressing him. There were all the elements of riot and anarchy together in the bibulous city, and the two factions needed only very slight provocation to fly at each other's throats and settle their differences once and for all in one wild saturnalia of crime. There had been some talk amongst the greens of appealing to the emperor's mercy, or of rising in open revolt against the weight of injustice under which they laboured, and Rhesus knew that Hypatius had in secret won some over to *his* cause. But as the two friends had not attended the inner councils of the faction for some time, having lost their hot enthusiasm for a mere colour, they put down much they heard as idle rumour, or wishes that were parents to the thought.

"I like not the aspect of things to-day, friend," said Rhesus, as they drew near to the hippodrome. "A little rent in the thin skin of this jollity would let loose a torrent of blood. But for the knowledge of the hidden treasure and the hope of relief in the future it holds out to us—and Eutasia—I would leave the city before nightfall."

"Which you will not do, and which it is therefore folly to discuss," replied Proclus. "As for the treasure, it is safe enough yet, for besides the two spies I have watching the convent, Marcen has three and Hypatius two more. It is scarcely likely, when the three parties of us are so jealous of each other, that one will have the chance of obtaining it without a struggle. I am trusting to to-day's doings to clear our way considerably. If a good opening offers, I am convinced that Hypatius will seize it; and as certainly as he does, Marcen will betray him and his friends to the Emperor. And then will be our chance. When robbers quarrel, good men take the spoil, as the philosophers say. But step back—quick!—the Imperial cariole is coming, and imperial animals are careless of life and limb. What a handsome driver Justinian employs! And what a steady one has Belisarius, behind there. *That* is a man, indeed!"

The jovial throng split in twain, making a broad path for the Imperial party, and in a whirlwind of dust, with a rattle and a flash, the people cheering and applauding frantically, they swept by. Justinian, a red-faced man with a firm-set figure, and Theodora, his unscrupulous, cruel, and beautiful wife, clad in robes of silk emblazoned with dragons of gold and violet, sat in the first chariot—a car of gold with white carpet and side curtains of purple, drawn by snow-white mules; behind them, in less state, but with scarcely less hauteur, came the questor and prefect, Tribonius the legislator, and John, the juggler of finance; and behind these Belisarius, the man who ought to have preceded all, in a plain chariot drawn by his own war-horses.

As Rhesus, like the rest, gazed at the lofty form and majestic head and noble face of their greatest general, and they greeted him with thunders of acclaim, he felt that he would readily have hailed this soldier as emperor of the seven-hilled city that was so poor an imitation of old Rome. If Belisarius had a fault it was that of unfailing loyalty to his master. A man in ten thousand—ay, in a thousand times ten thousand, truly! as Rhesus said again in an after day.

Following in the wake of the whirling wheels, the friends came soon to the circus, and seeking out old Sibron, entered the sanded course in company with him. This time the

Digitized by Google

first event was a race for the honour of a garland of priceless gems, given by Theodora's hand, and each faction had chosen two drivers.

"But one of ours has been foully slain since dawn," cried Sibron, drawing Rhesus towards the cars, "and we can get no redress, nor another volunteer for his place. You are our only hope. You rode well once before; you can win if you try. In with you!"

"But I am not prepared," cried Rhesus, astonished. "I am well known, and hated, and the race will not be fair. Let it go."

An arrow struck the foremost spokesman of the malcontents.

He protested in vain. Friends pressed round and forced the doubtful honour upon him, and ere he well knew where he was, he had taken the reins and was away with the rest; and when he once felt the keen excitement of the race he little cared. As they thundered round the course, to the cries of their partizans, in a close-huddled group of horses and cars, the great sweeping curve of the hippodrome, cut clear against the intense blue of the cloudless sky, the maze of many colours where the mighty throng filled the circling seats, the flushed faces, the hum of the many voices, all faded away, and Rhesus saw only the winning post, heard only the rattle of his rival's wheels.

He kept to the inside edge, gaining fast, and soon had left his comrade in green behind, as well as Hermiot, who rode for the blue, but the other of that colour, a sturdy youth, drove his grey steeds furiously, and for a time kept up the slight advantage he had obtained at the start. Over him, however, Rhesus began to gain after the first round, and hurling his thongs with a hand that had not forgotten its cunning of four years ago, he put such speed into the fast following strokes of his horses' feet, that, sweeping round on the outside, he passed in front amid a roar of excitement that shook the very ground, and tore onward to the goal, flushed, hot, and well-nigh spent, but victorious withal.

After the burst of mingled joy and anger, fell a hush over the assembly, and in the calm, Rhesus rushed on towards success. Scarcely a half-round of the amphitheatre was before him now, and his nearmost foe was a length behind. He had passed the Imperial party with a stern face, which relaxed to a smile as he drew near to the end of the fierce ride, when, glancing at the curving sea of faces at his right, he saw a man rise from his seat and throw something towards him, something that glittered and twisted in the air as it came. He gritted his teeth and held on, but the thing was well aimed, and fell over the horses' backs, and quickly as lightning was twining its sinuous folds round one of them. It was a deadly snake—one of the worst kind—and ere Rhesus could gather his startled senses he was thrown to the ground, one horse had broken loose, and the other was writhing in the death-agony that followed the bite of the venomous thing. And as Rhesus sprang to his feet, indignant, his nearest foe dashed to the front and passed over the winning line, the green driver next, and Hermiot last. The race was to the first chariot that came in, and the race had gone to the blue. So the judges decreed, despite many protests, and as Rhesus walked off, crestfallen, to where Sibron and Proclus awaited him, the masses of brilliant azure round the course rose as one man and cheered the winner and cried contempt on the loser until his blood boiled.

But the unjust decision was not allowed to pass quietly by. It was only the spark that fired the long endured discontent of the greens into open revolt. A roaring cry of rage went up from a thousand throats, a thousand daggers gleamed in the sunlight, a thousand desperate men leapt from their seats and poured into the arena, and stood before the imperial dias. The blue factionaries answered with waving of weapons and yells of derision, and the hippodrome became a scene of chaos. But the leaders of the green faction were determined men, and three forced their way to Justinian's presence and openly demanded redress for injustice, some surcease from unbearable oppression, some promise of impartiality for the future.

Their words were drowned by the howls and hooting of the blues at first, but they persisted, were joined by others, and at last obtaining a hearing, Justinian had no option but to listen. He sat in moody silence for some time, affecting indifference, but at length, weary, and prompted by his advisers, he rose irritably in his place and answered with words that came near to costing him his life.

"You appeal to me in vain," he said, "I will not listen further. The judges of the games have decreed, and I meddle not with their decision. You speak of murder and oppression and public plunder; I ask you what of the 3,000 blues you slew here—of the oppressions of *your* rule, and of the nightly assassinations. It is notorious that my soldiers have orders to sieze and hang all murderers of either party. So away from my presence, Jews, hypocrites, and heretics!"

He turned to his guards and bade them clear him a way out through the rabble, thinking to have done with the matter, but the sharp, stinging words roused the tamest to action, and as one body the crowd of green colour surged forward towards him. At that, the blues rose in exultant

defence, conscious of their superior numbers, and in another moment the factions would have been locked in a terrible struggle. Rhesus's blade was in his hand already, and he would have rushed forward, but Proclus and Sibron held him back, dragging him towards the gate; and it was well for as he wrenched himself free in his frenzy, an arrow well aimed struck the foremost spokesman of the malcontents, and the greens broke and fled, pursued by the revengeful foe. Some were slain in the tiers of seats, some in the arena, and many more in the passages and outlets; and at every avenue of egress a mad throng surged into the streets, carrying blood and disorder into all the quarters of the city.

The weak truce of law was broken and with the watchword "Nika!" ringing in the streets, all the elements of war and discord were let loose at once. With Proclus and Sibron, Rhesus was borne towards the convent of St. Conan in a fierce rush of the partizans, and they presently found themselves fighting against overpowering odds with their backs to its buttressed wall.

"Strike only in defence!" cried Proclus, "and edge away to the right. If we can but gain the passage unseen, and the secret door of which I alone have the key, we are safe."

"Tis easier said than done!" answered Rhesus, for though he had laid low two murderous villains who beset him at once, three more had taken their places, and his friends were falling fast. A slash scored his left arm, a thrust caught him in the leg, old Sibron went down at his side, under the swinging blow of a mace, like a felled ox. The wielder of it laughed aloud and turned to Rhesus, and as its spiked head hung above him, the Roman thought his end had come.

But the kindly fates had willed it otherwise, and the blow fell not upon him. The crowd of foes surged back, and the uplifted arm shortened its stroke. There was a cry of "Sanctuary! Sanctuary!" and a procession of portly monks came towards the convent gate, bearing the bodies of two half-strangled men to its sacred shelter.

A great concourse of both factions followed them, and cries of "Down with the traitor! down with the unjust minister!" rent the air. The two friends pressed forward, asking questions, forgetting their enemies at the strange sight, and learnt that the soldiers had seized and attempted to hang seven notorious assassins of both factions—had hung five, but failed to prevent the friends of the two last from rescuing them in the final extremity. One of the murderers thus snatched from the jaws of the death they so richly deserved, wore a sash of blue, the other a badge of green, and the factions cast aside their enmity and joined in attacking the soldiers.

There is nothing so fickle as an enraged mob, and in a moment, fired by the fierce harangues of several champions of the green, who dwelt upon the weight of the taxes and the sins of the quæstor and prefect, the opposing colours united as against a common enmity, and the blood-thirsty horde surged tumultuously towards the palace, venting its erst divided rage upon such luckless soldiers and loyalists as came in their way.

Out of all the dark dens and back ways of the city, the dregs of the population poured—the slaves, the assassins, the hunted criminals, the human wolves that spring forth and prey on society at all such times—and in the midst of it all, borne forward as on the crest of a mighty wave, seeing many of the emissaries of Hypatius at their now easy work, Proclus and Rhesus found themselves fighting side by side with men whose knives, but a moment before, had been at their throats.

The city was turned into Hades. Through the riot and carnage, fighting madly, giving and receiving many

The British and Gothic soldiers of the Imperial Guard remained to combat the revolutionaries.

hard blows, the friends found themselves at length near their own house. There, with a last struggle, they got out of the maddened mob, and wounded, and exhausted, but at least secure for a time, sought refuge within doors.

CHAPTER IV.

For Friendship's Sake.

All the rest of that day, and through the night, the slaughter and riot went on, the clash of arms sounded incessantly, the cries of the wounded and dying rang dismally in the ears of the home stayers, the glare and roar of incendiary fires lit up the darker hours. Justinian, growing fearful for his own safety, publicly appealed for some restoration of order, promising to dismiss the obnoxious ministers whose exactions had so roused the popular ire; but the enraged citizens refused to listen to him; and even when—to show his good faith—he officially bade the quæstor and prefect leave their positions, the reign of terror went on unchecked. So widespread was the tumult, so numerous were the bands of armed ruffians who held the city at their mercy, that all the wealthy and respectable citizens who could, conveyed themselves and their goods beyond the wall and camped out in the open beyond the Golden and the Charsian gates, and only a few regiments of mercenaries, the raw Heruli levies, and the British and Gothic soldiers of the Imperial Guard, remained to combat the revolutionaries.

These fought hard and well, sometimes driving back the rioters from the main streets, but they were no match in the end for the mad fury of a city let loose and ravening for blood.

As for Proclus and Rhesus, they kept to the house. It would have been madness to have risked their lives again in that horrible maelstrom of murder, and they were in hopes that by keeping quiet they would escape unmolested until the storm had spent itself. But it was fated differently.

Their slaves were well fed and well paid, and all trusty men, and sending them out at night, one at a time, they kept well acquainted with events. The fourth day passed like the rest, in alternate hope and fear, and as yet neither Hypatius nor Marcen had made any sign, but on the fifth of those days of blood one of the slaves ran in with hair streaming and garments rent, crying excitedly that the people had chosen a new emperor, the nephew of Anastasius, and that all who did not come out and enlist under him would be counted as his enemies. Even as he spoke, the sound of fighting came down the street, and going to the house-top, the friends saw that a group of the foreign soldiery was retreating slowly palacewards, pursued by a pressing crowd of the frantic citizens, led by Pompey, the brother of Hypatius.

A fresh fervour seemed to nerve the rebels. They fought like fiends, and all along the streets the women and children threw out stones and spears and braziers of blazing wood upon the heads of the luckless soldiers, and every time a gap was made in the sullenly retiring ranks, a hundred wild-eyed fanatics would hurl themselves in and fall upon the others with appalling recklessness.

"If these foreigners fought not so stubbornly, and Belisarius was not so obstinate a general, the cause of Hypatius would be at once assured," said Proclus. "As it is, I am afraid it is only a matter of time, unless Hypatius himself spoils all by hesitation. But do you not think, Rhesus, that now is our chance to get to the Hall of Waters, until one or the other wins the day? We are not safe here, now, and there we could be in hiding and be bringing some of the treasure to the bottom of the steps ready for removal. Then, even if Hypatius gains the purple, we can slip away unperceived with a fortune under our cloaks, and seek a new life elsewhere."

"It will be well," said Rhesus, "if we get out of here alive—which I doubt, for they have eyes on us already—but what of Eutasia? I go not without her."

"Leave that until later," returned the cynic shortly. "We must look to ourselves now. As you say, we are noticed—nay, we are beseiged—and we have some hot work on hand. Not so fast, my worthy marksman; not so fast."

He sprang nimbly aside as an arrow from the yelling crowd whizzed past him, and together they went down into the house and bade the slaves guard the doors. It was evident they were now discovered, and as Proclus said, having found the way to the treasure blocked and shrewdly guessing who had to do with it, Hypatius would have scant mercy on them if they fell into his clutches.

"It is fight to the last!" cried Rhesus, as a slave shouted out that the house was attacked on all sides, "no quarter, no truce! Rhesus the Roman and the ancient gods!"

And standing by the open casement near the central portico, that was now barricaded heavily, he called derisively to the savage foes to come on as he plied his arrows thick and fast. This but enraged them the more, and they assaulted furiously, besetting every outlet of the house and even, in one fierce charge, bursting down the barrier.

But as they scrambled over its ruins the defenders spitted them with their spears, and so hacked and hewed at their disorderly array that they gave back defeated. Three times the angry mob thus dashed at the door, and three times the trusty slaves beat them back; three times they broke and recoiled, shattered, spent, as a curling billow breaks upon a crag-embattled shore.

Then they drew off a space, hesitating. The twilight deepened, the reflection of a dozen fires flashed and reddened on the darkening sky from where plunder and iconoclasm were wreaking their devastating will. Then suddenly, whilst the beseiged were waiting the outcome of the delay, a forking tongue of flame shot up from the house below, on the street, another from above, and yet a third from a house in the rear; and ere they could well realise the horror of their position, they were surrounded by a curve of fire impassable by human life. And between the ends of the curve was the mob that hungered for their blood.

These attacked again, and more furiously, and once more forced the door and gained the lower hall, this time driving the defenders to the housetop. There these turned at bay, and since the stairway was but narrow, slew the wretches one by one as they came up until they were weary of the slaughter and ceased the attack.

"We are safe for a little while, at all events," said Proclus." It would needs take a slim man to pass between our weapons here, Rhesus."

"Those who have passed have been slim enough to vanish into the folds of the future," said Rhesus. "But, by the valour of Achilles, 'tis likely that we shall soon follow them there! They are firing the house itself, and we shall end our days like rats smoked out of their holes!"

As he spoke, a wreath of blue smoke curled up the stairway and the smell of burning with it, and as the wreath was followed by others, until they were enveloped in a cloud of smoke through which fiery tendrils now and then

He swung himself over the edge.

extended, a loud cry of exultation went up from the wolfish crowd.

"I care not to die suffocated;" said Proclus, dashing to the edge of the parapet nearest the street, "better broken bones and a sudden death than that! Over with you all after me—they are crowded thickly here, and either this fuel or their heads will break the fall!"

The round disc of brass caught the fellow edgways under the ear.

In another moment he had thrown down his blade and shield, swung himself over the edge, and vanished. Stumbling as they went, blinded by the dense smoke, Rhesus and the six slaves who were left, followed him, dropping one by one through the grey murk.

Bracing himself for a rebound, so that the fall might be broken, Rhesus felt his feet sink into something soft and yielding, from which he rose unhurt, though shaken, to find Proclus at his side.

"It is fortunate," said the cynic, ruefully glancing at his swordless belt, "that they have made such a confounded puther with their fire. We should not have escaped else, and we have a good chance now. Down among this hay, all of you, and slip out one by one into the crowd. You, slaves, can easily get out of danger. As for you and I, Rhesus, we will keep together."

"Friends once, friends to the end! But let me lead; I have kept my sword!"

Already loud cries of exultation rose from the rioters, and through the thick clouds of smoke that enveloped them, and crept between the wisps of the hay upon which they had fallen, the friends could see their foes gradually drawing off the house. Its neighbourhood was dangerous, and the fanatics thought the fire had done their work. In the confusion the two escaped unnoticed, and by the time they had gained the opposite side of the way, and cautiously mixed with the crowd, they saw the heap of hay catch fire and send up a long roaring sheet above the crashing ruins of the falling house.

The conflagration was spreading rapidly, like the others that were reddening the sky, so the fugitives got off easily, making straight for the convent. As they went they saw that the great baths of Zeuxippus were involved in flames, which stretched out greedy fingers that curled round the sacred walls of St. Sophia; and someone running past cried exultantly that the prefect's palace was destroyed. This news but served to quicken their pace, and at last, unnoticed, they dashed down the narrow passage and sought the sacred door. With wonderful calmness the cynic touched the spring, and they went in.

"Shall we wait here, or go farther?" Rhesus asked. "I have no mind to breathe the foul air of the vault for the gods know how long."

"Nor I," answered Proclus. "It would be safer, but most unpleasant, and if we keep watch here and have our ears open, I think we shall not need."

So they composed themselves to wait until the clamour of the rioting without should subside, then intending to adventure down for as much of the treasure as they could carry and be away before dawn. The sea was not far off, and there were boats and ships in plenty on all the shores of that city of unparalleled laziness and lawlessness, debauchery and drink. The thoughts of Rhesus ran on his Eutasia's pretty face, wilfully obstinate as he had last seen it; and out of the ceaseless droning of the outside noises, and the images his fancy painted on the background of the darkness, he fashioned two visions that were each alive with motion and moved with the passing of time.

One vision was a fair one—of himself and a golden haired girl companion wandering through a lovely garden hand in hand, with never a cloud to mar the sunshine of the day nor a breath of chiller air to pale the cheeks of his health or her pink beauty; the other was a vision of evil—of two outcasts wandering in the desert, blinded by the ceaseless glare of the sun and the scorching sand, nigh unto death with thirst and hunger, and neither knowing where the other was, though in truth they were not far apart. And he thought that the pictures contended with each other, first one and now another prevailing and filling the field of his mental vision, but never to hold it long. And then the shifting scenes that Hope and Fear together wove for him in that precarious hour changed to the dreams of a troubled sleep as the dawnshine melts into the perfect day.

He was awakened by the trample of many feet, the clamour of many voices, and Proclus shouting in his ear: "The enemy have found us out; they are beating at the door! Quick! down the stairs and past the falling door beyond the water!"

Rating himself soundly for his drowsiness at such a time, Rhesus asked, as they ran hurriedly down the moss-covered steps below the stone trap-door, how long he had slept and why he had been allowed.

"You were overwrought," said Proclus simply, "and I

could not fashion to rouse you. And I was awake and could watch. They came silently until they were at the door, or I would have wakened you sooner. But faster! their torches gleam behind!"

"It is Hypatius or some of his followers!" cried Rhesus, as they sprang into the boat and pushed off into the Cimmerian darkness that brooded over the water. "But I think they have run for nothing, after all!"

He turned and laughed at the group of men who came to the foot of the steps and hurled a volley of curses, with several arrows, at them; but the laugh died away on his lips when he saw that the foremost, the leader, was Marcen, that their blue-banded garments were splashed with blood, and that with wildly-reckless exultation they one and all leapt into the black flood and swam after the boat.

The friends pulled hard, but the torch-light was uncertain and the chain that guided them hard to see, and though they gained the footstone of the low arch first, they were scarcely within the sloping passage when the pursuers were upon them. They turned at bay, and Proclus with dagger drawn, Rhesus with sword, awaited the mad onset.

"Something terrible has happened," said Proclus, as they hesitated a moment before the rush, "or they would not set such value upon our worthy selves. The night has not gone so well with the green faction, I fear—And if I fall, Rhesus, and you live, take the key of the treasure and let it be your own, and Eutasia's. It is hung by a silken thread in the cloth of my left sleeve—And now for the final act in the tearful comedy of this indifferent, merry life of ours. You to the right, Rhesus; I to the left; and here a health to the ancient gods and the badge of green—in a drink that is richer and redder than wine!"

The pursuers came on them, pell-mell, all at once, and in the flickering light of the torches, in the narrow width of the slimy passage, the friends fought what they thought would be their last fight, but with the desperate energy of men who are determined to die hard. They had a little advantage owing to the darkness and the scarcity of room, and for a time kept the pursuers off, retiring slowly step by step, towards the great rock door. Marcen, a coward now that his hounds had driven the wolves to bay, kept discreetly to the rear of his gang, urging them on by threats and promises to take the two alive if it could be done, but to be quick over their work, as there was much else waiting.

In the narrow way and the uncertain light of the swaying torches, the contest was not so unequal as it seemed, and though retreating warily, Rhesus kept the assailants the length of his sword away. Few there were who passed it as it made a red-flaming arch from side to side of the tunnel; and the few who did found in the dagger of Proclus a more deadly weapon; and thus as the sword sang, and the sharp knife rose and fell, and the crowding assassins pressed on, the fight went down to where, grim, silent, impassive, the great rock door took shape from the grey gloom and barred their way.

At sight of it there came a lull in the strife, the ruffians thinking their foes in a corner, and as Marcen peered with shaded eyes at the smooth wall at their backs, Rhesus saw a sudden terror blanch his face, and knew that he suspected some secret which he could not fathom. For a moment of suspense he stood as one transfixed; then, his vagrant courage flaring up with the chagrin of his disappointed avarice, he sprang towards the friends with a fierce cry on his lips, and a heavy mace, studded with cruel spikes, uplifted in his right hand, calling upon his men to make an end of them speedily, and bring them out, alive or dead.

But in that brief moment of delay, a friend had offered his life for a friend—in vain, and yet not in vain. For seeing that one might hold the passage while the other raised the swinging stone and passed under to safety, Proclus had resolved to do so while his friend escaped, so that one of them at least might escape. At first Rhesus protested, saying that his should be the honour of keeping the way, but Proclus would have no refusal, and was so masterful, and the time for discussion was so short, that with a very bad grace the other consented.

"But of the two I have the mind least at ease!" he said, as with shaking hand he took the slender key.

"Tush!" answered Proclus, with a cynical smile—sardonic to the last—as he took the red blade in exchange and stepped forward. "Tush! I have no one to whom my life is worthy; no one for whom I care to live; and you have Eutasia and enthusiasm. Stand back, friend, and let me get at these fellows, and quick with your key there and begone! Let down the door as soon as you are past, and mind not me. I am weary of the world and would fain die flaunting a sword in its face! Away with you!"

With that grim smile still curving the corners of his mouth, he pushed Rhesus unceremoniously aside and turned to face the ghastly-visaged crew led by Marcen, who at that moment moved down upon him.

With a choking sensation in his throat that was new to him, half reluctant, yet half glad with a sheer animal love of life, Rhesus staggered down the tunnel a pace and sought the orifice. He found it and was about to place the key therein, when through the echoing passage rang a cry of mocking triumph, the rush of many feet, and the whistle of an arrow that splintered on the rock above his head; and thrusting the key into the folds of his green sash, Rhesus turned with clenched hands to meet his fate.

Proclus was down now, writhing in the death-grip, with his fingers locked on the wrists of a foe who strove to get his dagger free. He was looking towards his friend. Over the fallen twain three great ruffians, followed by Marcen, leapt. Rhesus had little time for thought and less for action, and ere he could use even his bare knuckles in defence, two swords gleamed on either side of him and a third glittered above his head. Marcen sprang forward with a cry to the man to desist and take his foe alive, but the warning came too late and the weapon curved through the swaying lights and shadows to the fatal fall. But Proclus saw the danger also, and his warning came not in vain. He loosed his hold of his foe, and freed himself with a sudden twist, and snatching up a fallen shield, hurled it full, with a last, heroic effort, at the head of the giant whose stroke impended over his friend.

The round disc of brass caught the fellow edge-ways under the ear, and sent him spinning and reeling against the slime-glistened wall. The blow fell short, and as Rhesus swayed, struggling in the grasp of the others, he saw Proclus fall back to the floor and the dagger of his foe flash down.

Marcen made his men search the two carefully, and himself went over them again and again, seeking for some clue to the secret whose existence he suspected; but the precious key must have slipped from Rhesus in the struggle, for it was not found. With black rage making his evil face the more evil in the semi-darkness, Marcen bade his men be going back. Rhesus was bound still more tightly and half carried, half dragged, between two stout villains to the front, feeling more dead than alive. Proclus they pulled to the water, and there with many a grim jest at the size of his mausoleum, two of them cast him in. Something sharp caught between the toes of his right foot and the wood of his sandal, and Rhesus could have cried aloud with the agony as he was hurried away; but in the haste and the darkness he could not distinguish its nature, and presently the pain was numbed. He was pulled out of the boat, and then up the narrow stairs, and so into the upper chamber.

Into this poured a dense volume of blue-grey smoke, through which the torches gleamed dully yellow, and as they dashed up through the blinding reek and out into the open air in the midst of a wild gust of wind and flame that swept round the crumbling walls of the doomed convent—fired by some reckless incendiary—Rhesus' head was swung sharply against a stone and he remembered no more.

(To be continued.)

The Changed Envelopes.

Carl stood gazing at the pretty head, very well executed in marble.

"Poor Rudolph," he murmured. "He is tired of the struggle for success, and I should like to see him win the competition so that he might marry his Lena. But ——"

He sighed, crossed the room and took up his chisel. The hot sun poured in through the one window which the little room, high up under the roof, contained.

Carl, and Rudolph, his friend, shared the room as a common studio. They had been friends now for six years, drawn closer together by the struggle, the disappointments, the poverty, which were the lot of both.

The door was thrown open and Rudolph entered.

"What luck, *mein Freund?*" asked Carl.

Rudolph tossed his cap upon the bare floor and sank wearily into a chair.

"Luck? None," he replied bitterly. "The dealer claims that he has not had even one offer for my dancing girl. The price is so high; he urges that one unknown, like myself, should not set so high a price, upon their work. He calls twenty-five too high a price, when once I would have laughed at the very idea of selling such a piece of work for less than two hundred marks. Oh, Carl, I am weary of the struggle! I had better go back to the old house and the work in the fields."

Carl crossed the room and laid his hand gently upon Rudolph's shoulder.

The two young men were strikingly dissimilar in appearance. Carl had the shoulders of a Hercules, with a face as fair as a woman's, clear blue eyes, soft and gentle in expression, and fair hair, curly and silken as a little child's. Rudolph was sinewy in build, dark and swarthy, with very black hair, and restless, passionate eyes.

"Cheer up, Rudolph," said Carl, "luck will come after awhile. Perhaps it is here even now; listen! Herr Frankinstein, our good Meister, has been here during your absence. The Count von Wardenburg invites all sculptors to submit at the end of three months the model of a statue of the Virgin. The sculptor submitting the model adjudged to be the best will receive the commission to make a life-sized statue for the Liebfrauen Kirche, for which he will be paid 20,000 marks."

"'Tis a fortune! I could then marry my dear Lena; and it would mean fame also, and fame means riches. I shall commence at once," cried Rudolph.

He rose to his feet and moved impetuously across the room. Carl smiled a pleased, gentle smile, and returned to his work.

* * * * *

Three months went by.

Rudolph was standing in the attic studio before a small plaster of Paris model of the Virgin. His arms were folded across his breast, his dark brows met in a moody frown.

"It is perfect!" he muttered. "Perfect!"

The door opened and a thin little man, with long, rough hair and twinkling black eyes, came into the room. As he caught sight of the model he tossed both hands above his head with a rapturous exclamation.

"Himmel! it is good, it is sublime!" he cried. "Rudolph, you have surpassed yourself. You will surely get the commission."

Rudolph started and his lips quivered.

"You—you are pleased with it?" he stammered.

"Pleased? I am enchanted, enraptured!" replied little Herr Frankinstein, his small body quivering with excitement.

"It is perfect! The whole figure breathes purity; you have a white soul, Rudolph, or you could never have designed that."

Rudolph turned abruptly away, crossed the room and returned with another model, which he placed beside the first.

"What do you think of this?" he asked hoarsely, while his eyes, full of passionate questioning, sought Herr Frankinstein's face.

The latter, with his head on one side, looked critically at the model.

"Ah! 'tis Carl's, I suppose," he said. "It is good, much like yours in some respects, but falling far short indeed. It has no chance to win the commission."

A swift pallor swept over Rudolph's face. His eyes rested gloomily upon the two models.

"I stepped in to tell you," continued Herr Frankinstein, "that the models must be sent to the committee not later than to-morrow. A sealed envelope must accompany each model, containing the name of the sculptor. These will not be opened till the decision is made, so you see the name or fame of the sculptor will bear no weight. You understand, my boy?"

"Yes, I understand," replied Rudolph dully.

Herr Frankinstein grasped his hand and shook it vigorously. There were tears in the little man's eyes.

"I am proud of you my dear Rudolph," he said. "Proud that you were my pupil!"

A little while later Carl returned, to find Rudolph pacing up and down the room, his face pale and drawn.

"You have come at last, Carl," he said. "I have news for you that will make you very glad. Herr Frankinstein has been here, and he went wild with delight over your model. He says it will win the commission, and he is not likely to err in his judgment."

Carl's eyes rested quietly upon Rudolph's face. His own showed no delight, no exultation.

"Really?" he said gravely. "Well, we shall see."

"I must leave you early to-morrow morning, Rudolph," said Carl, when his friend returned from a walk that evening. "I am summoned home. An uncle has died and left me a small competence. I go to see about it."

"Accept my congratulations, Carl," said Rudolph, wearily. "The Goddess of Fortune smiles upon you at last. But you will return to make the statue?"

"You seem very sure that I shall win, Rudolph," he said. "I am not so positive. If such should be the case, however, I will return to Berlin. You will let me know the result."

Early the next morning Carl took his departure. In the evening he stopped for the night in a small village. He was sitting in his room at the inn, when the door was thrown open and Rudolph entered. Carl sprang in surprise to his feet. Rudolph's face was white and his eyes were haggard. He sprang forward and caught Carl's arm. His hands were trembling with excitement and fatigue.

"Carl," he panted, "thank Heaven that I have found you!"

"What do you wish of me, Rudolph?" asked Carl gently, and that was the last time Rudolph ever heard the gentleness in Carl's voice, or saw the look of tenderness in Carl's soft blue eyes.

"Carl," he cried, "I have a confession to make to you. Listen! I—I so longed to win that commission. You know all that it meant to me, riches, fame, and Lena. I had set my heart, my soul, my very life upon it. When I realised that your model was superior to mine, I felt that I should go mad with despair. And in the night, Carl, a temptation came to me. As you know, the models were packed and ready to send in the morning. With each was a sealed envelope containing your name and mine. The tempter whispered in my ear, 'Change those envelopes.' You were going away, you would return only in case your model was the accepted one.

"I had permitted Herr Frankinstein to believe that your model was the one carved by myself. It was all very easy. Whereas I could not have conceived your model, I could accurately copy it in marble. And the tempter dulled my conscience by whispering that I stood so much more in need of the fame and the money than yourself, who were now independent.

"Carl! Carl! You were my friend, and I loved you, but both love and friendship, and honour, too, went down before that temptation, and—and I crept into the studio and changed the envelopes."

He paused, and buried his face in his hands. Carl looked at him more sorrowfully than angrily.

"And you have followed me to confess this to me—why?" he asked.

Rudolph lifted his face, its pallor stained with a red flush of excitement.

"Because," he replied, "it appears that after all Herr Frankinstein and myself were wrong in our judgment, or the committee failed to see the merit that we did, for, Carl, it was my model that was chosen! Do you understand, Carl—my model, to which I had attached your name? A messenger came to the studio for you. I told him you had gone away, and I set out to follow you. I have been half mad; but, oh, Carl, something must be done to give me back my own!"

"You will return with me—you will tell them that the model was mine—that there was a mistake."

"There was no mistake," Carl's voice, clear, cold and stern, interrupted him. "Listen to me," he continued, as Rudolph stared bewilderingly up into his face—that fair face which he had never seen so forbidding and stern before. Rudolph shrank from the look in the blue eyes bent upon him. "While you were planning treachery against me," said Carl, "I was pondering how I could turn matters for your interest and welfare. I knew that my model was superior to yours and I was sorry, for I wanted you to win the commission. I loved you better than myself. I could not sleep for thinking of it, and about daylight it occurred to me to change the envelopes. I first wrote you a letter entreating you to accept the commission should my model win—that for you to acquire fame and fortune would afford me more happiness than to have both myself. This letter I placed so that you would receive it as soon as the result of the competition was made known. After I had written the letter I went into the studio and changed the envelopes."

A low moan broke from Rudolph's lips. He sank down into a chair and hid his face in his hands.

"I have loved you well, Rudolph," continued Carl, "loved you better even than myself, and I would have forgiven anything save treachery. Even had you come and made this confession to me through remorse and repentance I might still have forgiven. But no, you confessed your treachery only that you might escape its consequences, and still reap the harvest which you imagined your guilty hand had put from you."

Rudolph lifted his face and looked helplessly up into Carl's.

"What—what will you do?" he asked.

"I shall return to Berlin," replied Carl. "I shall claim my rights. The explanation of the mistake I leave to you. I shall contradict whatever explanation you may see fit to offer. The 20,000 marks received for the statue shall be yours, the fame shall be mine."

"And then?" murmured Rudolph, and into his eyes flashed the old tenderness, wistful, infinitely sad.

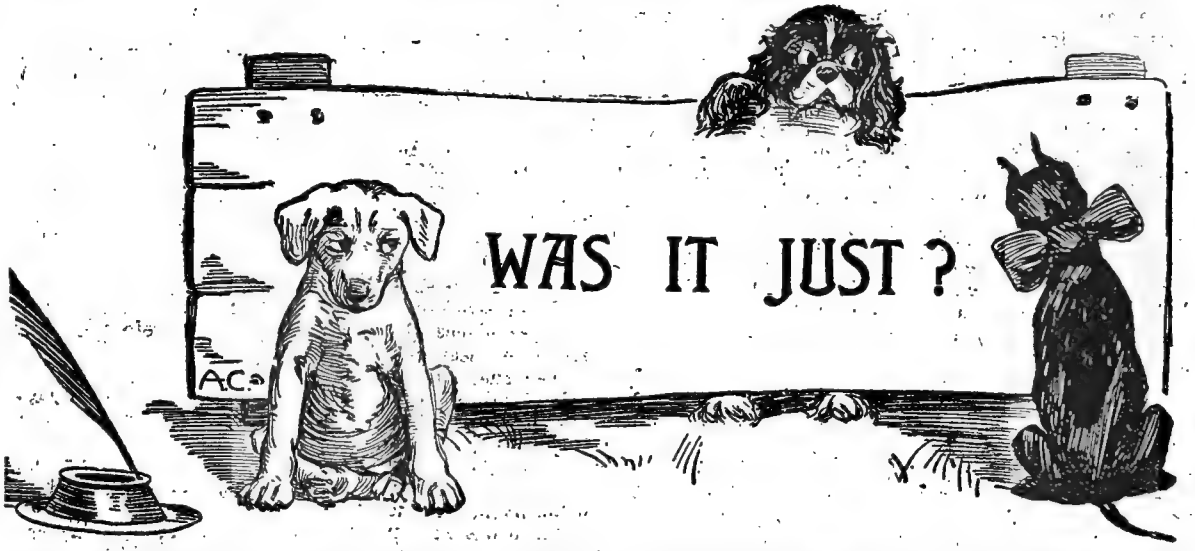
But there came no softness into Carl's blue eyes.

"And then," he replied, "you and I will be strangers for ever."

And Rudolph bowed his dark head, for at that moment neither fame nor riches seemed as sweet as the friendship he had forfeited.

HAROLD BROOK.

Digitized by Google



"Well, Nelly," said my uncle, meeting me at the porch, "do you see any changes?"

It was the morning after my arrival. I had been looking at the hills, and breathing the most delightful air, and saying over and over to my happy self:

"I'm so glad to be in the dear old place one more."

"I have noticed but one change," I made answer to Uncle Allen, "and that is in the occupants of the cottage by the spring. The Trents used to be there. Baby Mary was a great pet of mine."

"Mary's father prospered while here, and has bought a little place of his own down by the river."

"And who lives in the cottage now? I saw two young men come out of there before breakfast."

"Yes: they're working on my farm this year. They lodge there with an elderly woman, a weaver of considerable skill——"

"And a big talker," said Aunt Mary, from the doorway. "You're such a girl for stories, Nelly, you must get Mrs. Earle to tell you some. She can serve you with any kind, from a ghost story to an incident of the American Civil War—she was out there at the time."

"That woman has seen hard times, stirring times, exciting times," said Uncle Allen. "She is said to have been in many parts of the world."

"She has been the heroine of many an adventure," said my aunt. "You will enjoy her talks, Nelly."

Impetuosity had ever been one of my characteristics.

"I should like to go at once and see her weave and hear her talk!" I cried. "But how can I get her into a reminiscent train of thought?"

Aunt Mary laughed.

"No matter what you say, child, you will remind her of some interesting chapter of personal history."

So I donned my hat and ran down the hill to call upon this woman of such varied life memories.

I heard the noise of the loom long before I reached the open door. So busy was the weaver that I had to knock before she saw me. At the sound she started and gave such impetus to the fling of her shuttle, that it fell at my feet.

I hastened to restore it, at the same time begging her not to rise.

"You are Mrs. Earle?" I asked doubtfully, for I had pictured a bent and care-worn woman, bearing the marks of her changeful life. I saw instead a figure as straight as a plumb-line; an expressive face; a pair of dark eyes as bright as a baby's, and heavy black hair twisted high on a well shaped head.

"That's who I am," she answered cordially, "and I know who you are without asking. Your uncle's been expectin' you for more than a week. You look enough like him to be his daughter. Sit down in that chair and take off your hat."

"Don't let me interrupt you," I said. "I never saw anybody weave, and came down to watch you."

Having thus stated half the truth, I drew my chair beside the loom.

The weaver smiled like one humouring a child, and bent to her task without a word.

When the work had increased about two inches in length, Mrs Earle gave a sudden short laugh.

"It didn't look very friendly of me to fling the shuttle at you," she said.

"That was my fault. I knocked so abruptly that it startled you."

"I've been a weaver off and on ever since I was a girl of eighteen. That is the second time in all these years that I tossed my shuttle so hard that it went out of the door. I thought of that other time the minute it flew out of the door."

She stopped the weaving and looked past me through the open door with so thoughful an air that I scented my story.

"Tell me about it, please," I said, inwardly smiling at the remembrance of Aunt Mary's parting assurance.

"It was in December and dreadfully cold," she began. "Father was in the war, the American Civil War, I mean. He was an Englishman, but he was drawn into it. Mother was weakly, and I had to take care of her and the children. I was older than the rest by a good deal.

"The four years of the war seemed forty years to me. All the men for miles round were gone, and all the boys that were big enough to shoulder muskets.

"But at the time I was speaking of, one of our neighbours, a young man, was home on furlough; he'd been wounded in the arm. Him an' me had always known each other and liked each other the way boy and

girl will, you know. For I went out there when I was a child.

"Well, one day his mother came over to our house and she says to me:

"'Rose, where's Louis gone to?'

"'I don't know I'm sure,' says I, and blushed, for I was bashful, and it worried me to have her make out that I knew more about Louis' comings and goings than she did. I'd been wondering why he hadn't come round the day before, for he'd been in the habit of dropping in every day.

"Louis was a great hunter. I've known him to go off in the mountains by himself and stay a week or two, hunting and trapping. But I knew that wasn't where he'd gone now, for his arm wasn't strong enough yet to carry a gun.

"A few days after his mother was at our house the door opened and Louis walked in. Mother had taken all the children and gone to see a neighbour a little way off, so I was alone. I was weavin' a carpet.

"Louis came over to the loom. He had a buckskin pouch in his hand. Without saying a word he took out a gold piece and laid it on the carpet right under my eyes. Then he took out another and laid it by the side of that one, and then another and another, till they stretched the full width of the carpet and part way back. There was fifty of them. Then Louis says:

"'Rose, will you share these shiners with me?'

"A little streak of sunshine came through the window and made the gold glitter till it hurt my eyes. I looked up at Louis. His face shone yellow like the gold. I don't know why, but as I looked at him I didn't like him as well as I did before he went away and came back with all his money. I was troubled in my mind.

"'How did you come by all this, Louis?'

"'I earned it.'

"'How?'

"'By saving an army.'

"'What army? And how?'

"He began to brush the gold into a pile with his hand.

"'It ain't fair for me to answer a dozen questions for you before you answer one for me,' says he, laughing strangely; 'but a girl must always have her curiosity satisfied.

"'Well, this army that I saved from being cut to pieces had got into a very awkward position. The enemy had heard it was goin' to cross the mountain, and they throwed up fortifications on top and fixed a regular trap for it. At a certain place that they'd have to pass, trees were nearly cut down so that a few picks would finish them. Men were hid waitin' for the army to go by, and then they were to topple these trees across road and shut off retreat.

"'Things were planned very well, but the army got wind of it somehow. They couldn't go back, for they were runnin' from the enemy, an' they couldn't go on, for there was another enemy waitin' for 'em in front. They didn't know how to get out of the trap.

"'Then a feller who knowed about me bein' at home goes up to the General, and says: "There's a man not far from here that knows every inch of ground on these mountains. If anybody can lead us out of here, he's the man."

"'"Fetch him here double quick," says the General.

"'So this feller——'

"'Who was it, Louis?' I asked.

"But he clinked his money against my shuttle and laughed at my curiosity again.

"'This feller and five more, armed to the teeth, came across me and says: "You're to come with us and no questions asked."

"'So they took me to the General. He tells me the fix they're in and asks if there's any escape. I says yes. He waits for no more.

"'"Lead me out and you will be richer by a good deal. Refuse, and you'll be a dead man in five minutes."

"'I thought of you, Rose, and led them down through the valley and well on towards Covington.'

"'Was it our men?' says I.

"I remember how dry my lips were and how choked I felt in the throat.

"'It was life or death to me,' says he, 'so what difference does it make to you which army I saved?'

"'If 'twas our men, it was outrageous for you to take the money. If you helped the enemy and prevented a great victory for our side, you're a traitor! And if you mean to say that thinkin' about me made you a traitor, I'll thank you to stop your thinkin'.'

"He took his hand off the gold and looked at me with a black face.

"'If it had been you, I suppose you would have told them to fire away?' he said, with a sneer. 'You're very brave, but I can tell you it don't feel so nice to be shot.'

"I knew as well as if he had told me that he had opened the trap and let the enemy out.

"I took the buckskin bag and put all the gold back into it.

"'I won't share your money, and I wish you good-bye,' says I.

"He took the bag and turned away without a word, and I began to weave again.

"I was full of temper in those days, and I was all on fire for our side, though I wasn't a born American.

"To think that Louis had helped the enemy made me so mad that I hardly knew what I was doing. I gave my shuttle a tremendous fling, and it hit Louis in the back as it went out of the door. Of course he thought I did it on purpose, but he never looked round.

"Well, all kind feelings between him and me was over. He joined the other side."

"Did you learn who the General was, and do you think that Louis would really have been shot?"

"Yes, I did hear who it was; and a man I know saw the General after the war, and asked him that very question. 'On the spot and like a dog!' says he."

"That wouldn't have saved his army. But, tell me, would *you* have refused to guide him out?"

"Miss Nelly," said she solemnly, "when Louis was tellin' his tale, I had no idea. That was the enthusiasm in me. But many a time since then I've lain awake at night thinkin' about it. Of course, promises nor threats wouldn't have moved me; but if I'd stood there lookin' over hundreds of men, and knowed that I could be the means of savin' 'em or destroyin' 'em, I'm not going to say I wouldn't have led 'em out. I'm a woman, and God's put soft hearts in us women."

I was strangely moved by the fire of her glance and the rugged picturesqueness of her words.

She leant over her neglected work, and tossed the shuttle through the wrap backwards and forwards a dozen times. Then she gave me a side look, and asked curiously:

"What would you have done, Miss Nelly?"

And I, too, have asked this question of myself in those rare night hours, when sleep has refused to "weigh mine eyelids down."

FRANK WIMBLEDON.

Digitized by Google

An Artistic Revenge.

"At last, Scott, we're on Homeric ground. I suppose Clytemnestra superintended the family washing for the lordly house of Agamemnon down by that brook."

Thus spoke one of the two stalwart and sun-browned young men who were seated beneath an olive tree on the hillside just north of the site of ancient Mycenæ, in the Pelopponesus. They were English gentlemen who were making a pedestrian tour through Greece, and had arrived, on a hot September afternoon, at this famous place.

Their elevated position gave them an extended view of the beautiful Argolic Gulf, with a big man-of-war riding at anchor in the offing, from the mast of which the British flag floated, brilliant in the slanting sunshine. At the foot of the hill on which they were seated, across the little fields and orchards where the peasants were busy with the harvest, they saw a group of women at the brook in the valley below.

The young man who had spoken put his field-glass to his eyes.

"By Jove, Scott!" he exclaimed, "I tell you these Greek women are the handsomest in the world. Well might one of their great-great-grandmothers have kept two nations in commotion for ten years. Do you see the tallest girl in that group? Look at her! A form like a goddess! An ideal Helen of Troy!"

Scott slowly took his pipe from his mouth.

"Come now, Lyle, you're raving again," he replied. "Your newly-discovered Helen is doubtless a goat-herd from that miserable village down there, with a soul as ignorant of sentiment as her garments are of soap."

"Well, Scott," replied Lyle, with severity, "I am thankful for one thing at least, and that is that my soul isn't yet quite dried up within me, till it has lost all power to see the beautiful, as yours has. Come, let's go down to the village and get something to eat."

There is a good hotel in the village of Kharvati, where visitors to the neighbouring ruins are entertained. Here the young Englishmen made a hearty supper on rye bread, mutton and tea.

The harvest moon rose early and flooded the country with her beams. The two men sat a long time before the open window of their room, which overlooked the whole village. They had smoked in silence for an hour, when suddenly Lyle pointed down the road, and exclaimed in an excited whisper to the dozing Scott:

"There she is again, as I live! Now look at her and take back your vile insinuation about soap."

A young man and woman were strolling up the street. He was a swarthy, dark-eyed fellow, in the uniform of a Greek soldier. The young girl at his side chanced to raise her face to the searching moonlight, and both the young fellows were struck with her remarkable beauty. Her head was uncovered, and her luxuriant hair was combed low over her brow, and fastened in a simple coil at the back of her shapely head. Her face was purely classic in outline; such a face as the old sculptors loved to cut in marble—full of intellect and of passion.

The couple walked leisurely up the street, evidently uttering, in the melodious Greek tongue, those light nothings that youth and moonlight inspire in all languages. They paused before the door of the inn, and the two strangers heard and understood their parting "Good-night, Stephano," and "Farewell, Hellene."

"There, Scott, what do you think of her now? See what a superb creature you would fain have maligned!" exclaimed Lyle.

"Well, I must say," replied Scott, "either the moonlight played us a trick, or she is a rather pretty girl."

Next morning the two tourists commenced their explorations among the famous ruins. The region is replete with interest, and as their daily intercourse with the people afforded opportunity for the study of the

Digitized by Google

modern Greek—one of the chief objects of their tour—they decided to spend some time in the place.

They did not see Hellene again for some days, but Lyle did not scruple to find out what he could about her from the peasants.

He learnt that she was the grand-daughter of the rich old landlord with whom they lodged. Her parents were dead, and her education had been intrusted to an old tutor, famous for his learning, who died the year before. And soon, they said, she was to marry Stephano, the young soldier, the son of a wealthy neighbour.

One afternoon the two young men were resting in the shadow of the massive walls which form the entrance to those celebrated ruins called the "Tomb of Agamemnon." They were discussing a fragment of pottery which they had just discovered, when Lyle, looking up, saw Hellene coming slowly towards them, picking here and there the late flowers and grasses, evidently quite unconscious of their presence.

The ground over which she was advancing was strewn with blocks of brecca from the ancient walls, which made her progress difficult, and the two friends watched with admiration the ease and grace of her movements, which brought out the fine lines of her agile figure.

At length she raised her head and saw the two men with surprise and embarrassment, for she seemed on the point of flight.

Lyle stepped forward, hat in hand.

"Pardon us," he said, in her own tongue, "for startling you. We ought to have made our presence known sooner. But we have found a curious piece of pottery here, and were trying to determine its origin. Will you look at it?" He held out the fragment in his hand.

Her first fright had vanished, but the girl stood regarding them with a look of indecision, which threatened to end the interview abruptly. But gradually a more confident expression took its place, and she asked:

"Do you know Homer? You speak my tongue well."

"No," replied Lyle, "I can't say we know him very well, but we read him and have learnt to love him. You Greeks have a great advantage over the rest of the world in reading Homer in your own tongue."

"Indeed we have," replied the young girl, her embarrassment rapidly disappearing; "but very few of our countrymen appreciate it. Yet some do, for all Greeks are not like those who go abroad to get rich. There are still many who enjoy the glorious language and traditions of our people. Oh, yes," she continued, daintily taking the fragment from Lyle's outstretched hand, "there are many such specimens here; I have collected a lot of them myself."

A beginning thus made, they passed easily to other topics of common interest. The Englishmen found that this young girl was thoroughly educated in the literature of her country, as well as its history, and loved both fervently.

An hour passed in pleasant converse. At the earnest request of the two young fellows, Hellene finally consented to recite to them some of her favourite passages from the Iliad.

She seated herself on a rock which had fallen from the gigantic ruin behind her, and with the setting sun shining full on her beautiful face, glowing with the immortal words she spoke, she formed a picture against the background of those massive walls which would have won the admiration of a far less appreciative audience than the two listeners. When she had finished, the three walked back to the village together.

For a few days thereafter the Englishmen saw much of Hellene. They examined the fine collection of antiquities which she herself had made, and found her of invaluable assistance in several branches of study in which they were engaged.

But no woman could long fail to see in Lyle's every glance and tone that wondrous something which women long for and yet fear to look upon. A shyness and diffidence, quite contrary to her former frank and easy manner, gradually interposed a barrier to their intercourse, till at last the tourists rarely saw her. Scott grumbled and blamed Lyle for it all.

"It's only another case of your confounded enthusiasm spoiling everything. Here I was nearly through with my to-be celebrated thesis on 'Ancient and Modern Greek,' and you knew that the girl was my main assistance for the work, and yet, like a fool, you must go and fall in love with her, and put her to flight. Why can't you study a thing from a purely scientific standpoint?"

But Lyle's dejection at Hellene's avoidance of him at last became so great that even Scott was moved to pity. The disconsolate lover tried all in vain to have a word with the girl. She deftly thwarted his clumsy masculine plans until he became well nigh desperate.

One evening, when this condition of things had gone on for several weeks, the two men were smoking in the little front room of the inn. The village had been quiet for some time when they heard a light footstep, and caught a glimpse of Hellene as she slipped quickly out of a side door into the moonlit street.

Lyle rose with a look of grim determination on his face and followed her. In a moment he was at her side.

"Hellene," he said, "can't I walk with you? I have wanted to speak with you about something for a long time."

She made him no answer, and they walked on in silence together.

The road lead past the last scattering houses of the village, along the bank of the stream. It was bordered by gnarled old olive trees through whose branches a mosaic of light and shade flittered from the moon to the ground. A sleepy gurgle came now and then from the stream close by.

Lyle stopped, took Hellene's hand in his own, and said:

"Hellene, you must know what I want to tell you. You know that I love you better than life. Don't you see you've been killing me by inches of late? Why do you shun and avoid me so?"

The girl's eyes were downcast for a moment, and he saw her bosom heave in quick sobs. Then she raised her face to his, and there were tears of a great joy in her glorious eyes.

The lovers did not see the crouching figure of a man which glided away from the wall near by off into the placid night.

Scott was hard at work all the next day on his notes. In the early afternoon Lyle went alone to visit a distant part of the ruins, where he was to obtain certain measurements which had been forgotten. Hellene saw him pass from the inn, and an expression of suppressed anxiety took the place of the radiance in her eyes.

Lyle proceeded to a lonely spot some two miles from the village, and was bending over to examine a broken fragment of rock, when he was suddenly seized from behind by a powerful hand, and hurled backwards on the ground with such force as to render him for the moment

Digitized by Google

unconscious. When he opened his eyes, his feet were tied, and his hands securely pinioned behind him. Stephano was seated on a rock near by.

The two men looked at each other for a moment in silence. Stephano was calmly rolling a cigarette in his tawny fingers, and a mocking smile played about his mouth. Lyle could not long control his wrath.

"You sneaking coward!" he cried. "Is this the way a soldier fights?"

Stephano regarded him a moment, then replied, and his voice was low and melodious:

"You English have a saying I believe, that 'all is fair in love and war.' You came and stole the heart of my Hellene, the fairest girl in Greece. Did you think you could carry her off so easily? All Greece, you know, fought ten years for one woman. You should have been wiser!

"Now I'm going to cut the artery in your arm with my dagger point here, and then I shall sit still and see you slowly bleed to death!"

Lyle's anger burnt within him as he realised his own helplessness.

"What! you infernal villain, do you mean to murder me without a chance to strike a blow? If you have a grain of manhood in you, set me free and I will fight you in any way you choose."

"Control yourself, stranger," answered Stephano with maddening deliberation. "There is no need of such excitement. You have brought this on yourself—you risked it and lost. Now take the consequence like a man."

With careful precision Stephano felt for the artery in the bared arm of his victim. A quick stroke and Lyle felt the blood trickling down over his tied hands. Stephano seated himself opposite and spoke as follows:

"Yes, this is an artistic way of dealing with an enemy—not the bungling work of a common assassin, This is the very luxury and refinement of revenge. Ah! My fine Paris, think of the Helen you are losing! Think of those eyes! How they look at one! Think of the kisses of those lips—nectar for the gods!"

At first Lyle's soul was filled with a mighty surge of passion, together with a desperate resolve not to gratify the villain by any sign of fear or suffering. As his strength failed, he gradually became calmer.

He heard distinctly the long drawn shrill of a locust in the grass near by. He imagined curious shapes in the clouds that floated high up in the blue vault. His truant thoughts recalled a particular novel which he had borrowed when a boy and hidden till he had read it through. He even smiled as he thought of the swaggering hero, bound and tortured by the Indians, yet making his escape by miraculous feats of strength and daring. He almost laughed aloud as he made a whimsic comparison of the story with his own condition.

But his strength was going fast. Great blurs of darkness came and went before his eyes. He had almost lost consciousness, when he seemed to see Hellene suddenly appear, with Scott dimly visible in the background.

The girl paused a moment, then with a bound like a tigress she sprang upon Stephano, bore him to the ground, and something in her hand flashed in the sunlight. Then Lyle felt his head raised and a handkerchief bound tightly round his arm.

Several hours later Lyle was roused from his torpor by the fresh sea breeze and the motion of the little steam launch which was rapidly making way from the harbour to the great man-of-war in the bay. He found himself bolstered up on the cushions beneath the stern awnings of the little craft, with Hellene seated at his side.

The light of a deathless love shone in her lustrous eyes. Scott stood by the hatchway, looking back toward the fast retreating shores of Greece. Lyle caught the words he was muttering to himself.

"Yes—had to do it. Girl wouldn't be left behind. Lucky thing I knew the captain—big row if they'd found him before we got off. All on account of the fool's confounded enthusiasm. Never can investigate anything like a genuine scholar; always puts his foot in it somehow."

M. Barnard.

- THE FIRST NUMBER -

OF THE

PICK-ME-UP LIBRARY

Will be Published on Tuesday, July 26th. Price Sixpence.

YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS IT.

You can't afford to miss this week's number of *The Sunday Reader*, price one penny. It is full of attractions, full of interest, full of new ideas.

It contains, in the first place, a new serial story, written by the foremost religious writer of the day. This story is entitled, "The Cords of His Sin," and unfolds a mystery of such extraordinary character that all the readers attempts at solving it will be baffled. The story is powerfully written, and beautifully illustrated—the full, double-page picture is a perfect gallery of art. You can't afford to miss "The Cords of His Sin," for it will keep you amused and interested from beginning to end.

Then, in the second place, this week's number of *The Sunday Reader* contains a new competition, with a hundred handsome prizes. The first prize is a

MAGNIFICENT TEN-GUINEA SEWING MACHINE.

This is one of the best machines Messrs. Wheeler and Wilson, of Finsbury, have ever manufactured.

It is, moreover, as ornamental a piece of furniture as anyone could desire. You can't afford to miss the chance of winning it.

Then, in the third place, a magnificent coloured plate is given away with this week's *Sunday Reader*, a reproduction of masterpiece which has never been offered in this manner before. The cheapest engravings and photographs cost one guinea each. In addition to these attractions, this week's *Sunday Reader* contains hundreds of interesting articles, amusing anecdotes, pithy paragraphs, and two complete stories.

PRICE ONE PENNY. THE SUNDAY READER. EVERY THURSDAY.

IF YOU HAVE anything you want to sell, or if there is anything you want cheap, try a sixpenny advertisement in "Our Bargain Counter" in the Athletic Record.

The Lottery Ticket.

All Naples was amusing itself. The tide of gaiety rising throughout the holiday week had reached high-water mark; and to-night, four hundred thousand Neapolitans and many foreigners, including a little party of five English people, were abroad bent on the pursuit of pleasure.

Professor Roger Poppleton was one of the five; the other four were the Hon. Thomas Whipple, substantial and sedate; Mrs. Whipple, portly and self-possessed; Miss Whipple, newly "out" and impartially enthusiastic; and Miss Alice Feltham, aged twenty-three, with a record of social successes and a secret ambition to study art in the atmosphere of foreign capitals.

Professor Poppleton, usually very dignified—as became his position—seemed to have forgotten everything except that he was abroad on a holiday, that he was a bachelor of barely middle-age, and that an uncommonly attractive and companionable girl was clinging to his left arm.

And why remember anything else? The Neapolitans were having a good time, and seemed disposed to share their fun.

Crowds of laughing, chattering, gaily-dressed people of all classes and conditions surged through the streets, spread out over the open places, and choked the narrow thoroughfares. Everywhere the "bang-bang" of the tricchi tracche punctuated with exclamation points the hum of happy peasants, and above the snap of fireworks and the buzz of voices rose the strident tones of bagpipes, played by perambulating Calabrian musicians before the street shrines of the Madonna.

So contagious was the spirit of merriment that the whole party caught the infection, making it merely a subject of jest when, from time to time, the meeting of two opposing streams of humanity resulted in a temporary deadlock. And it was with much good-humoured comment on demoralised headgear and neckties that in one of these blockades they escaped into a shop whose open doors offered a convenient haven.

As it happened, it was a curio shop, and after a cursory round of the usual photographs, rosaries, and lava ornaments, the sight of certain quaint prints suddenly awakened the professor's scholarly instincts.

"Exquisite!" he murmured, bending over a quaint presentiment of a Pompeian feast. "Absolutely unique! Ah—h, Miss Feltham," impressively, "I know you will appreciate—" and turning, the professor stopped short with that embarrassment that always follows an address to empty space.

For Miss Feltham was at the other end of the shop, listening to the explanation of the sale of State lottery tickets which the shopkeeper was giving to the rest of the party. Her feminine instinct felt the professor's discomfiture and brought her at once to his side.

"You will make me happy by accepting this as a—a little souvenir of our day at Pompeii," said the professor, with that distinguished urbanity that made one forget his forty-five years.

Miss Feltham returned thanks in a charming manner for the holiday gift.

"And I have one for you, too," she said, "only I can't divide it yet, and I can give you only half. No, I won't tell you what it is; wait and see," with a certain tantalising drawing down of her eyelids.

By this time they were in the street again and carried along by the crowd through the Via Nazionale, Naples' most fashionable promenade, towards the Cathedral.

Just how it happened Professor Poppleton never knew, but within a hundred yards of their destination, where the pressure forced them into single file, a counter current in the throng engulfed him as a wave might do, sweeping him away from Miss Feltham and the rest of the party into a black, narrow courtway like a hole in the wall. Before he could catch his breath or look round, another wave seemed to carry him straight through an open doorway into the hall, and thence to a grimy, gaudily decorated little room, where he found himself the centre of a group of chattering, laughing, jubilantly enthusiastic Neapolitans.

"Evidently," the professor thought, "these fun-loving people have singled me out as a target for one of their holiday jokes because I am a foreigner."

It was annoying, but he fell back on his philosophy and determined while in Naples to do as the Neapolitans do. He therefore beamed back at them and awaited developments.

Apparently encouraged by his manner, the jokers—evidently of the peasant class, by their gay jackets and petticoats, and many-coloured silk scarfs, crowded about him, and began jabbering energetically, with frequent gestures towards their guest. Obviously, their remarks concerned his personal appearance, and, taken in connection with the accompanying laughter, they were witty; but as the professor knew no more of the Neapolitan dialect than his hosts did of Greek or Sanscrit, he could only smile in sickly fashion, and wait until their momentary exuberance should subside and he be released.

When the moments grew to ten and twenty with no change in the situation, the professor determined to resort to that dignified diplomacy that had often served to quell excitement among those other irresponsible creatures, the undergraduates, and, still smiling, but with an air of decision, he began to push his way toward the door.

In an instant his way was blocked by a swarthy woman, whose eyes shone like hard lumps of coal beneath her headdress of orange silk, and who shook a key at

him with would-be playfulness, to show that the door was locked. There was evidently more of the joke to come, and with a feeling of annoyance he turned toward his captors. At once their faces lighted up and several pointed significantly to his eyes.

Now, one of the professor's eyes was of glass, and replaced an optic that he had sacrificed on the altar of chemistry. Upon that never-shifting artificial eye many would-be college wits had rung the changes, but always at a safe distance. And here were these Neapolitans laughing in his very face at his affliction! If it was merely one of their festival liberties it was an unkind one, and the professor's face flushed.

Meantime the chattering among his captors had reached that high pitch that means intense feeling, and their gestures showed that they were urging some act on one of their number. As if in answer to their motions, he presently pushed his way toward the professor, and holding his left hand within a few inches of that dignitary's face, with the forefinger of his left hand began slowly and meaningly to count the extended fingers.

A light broke upon the professor's mind; undoubtedly this was a hint that he was to buy his way to freedom.

Thrusting his hand into his pocket, he drew out a handful of coins of different denominations, which he placed triumphantly on the table; and then with a confident air, turned to the door, only to meet with another repulse. For now a second man had been pushed forward and repeated the process of pointing to the professor's eye and counting his own fingers.

By this time it had dawned upon their unwilling guest that this was no ordinary joke; indeed, that it was no joke at all. The people had ceased smiling, and were very much in earnest. Several of the men glared at him with faces that bore "villain" written all over them; and even the women looked capable of wielding the stiletto.

In another second mere annoyance gave way to fear, as it flashed upon him that he had been deliberately kidnapped in the open streets of the city by a set of little better than brigands, and that he was completely in their power.

Yet what could they want? More money? To think it was to pull his purse out and lay it on the table.

With gestures of impatience, his offering was pushed back, and the tiring pantomime repeated, but with greater impressiveness.

And suddenly a frightful thought nearly undermined the professor's self-possession. These people wanted a ransom and meant that if they did not get it they would put out his eyes. The idea seemed incredible, but it was backed up by long-forgotten stories that immediately flooded the unfortunate man's mind—stories of captured tourists subjected to horrible tortures at the hands of Italian brigands.

While the professor was by nature a peaceful, law-abiding citizen, who pooh-poohed the idea of carrying arms in a civilised city in the nineteenth century, he was not lacking in courage. In an instant he assumed an attitude calculated to show that he could not be trifled with.

"I have given you all the money that belongs to me, and I have nothing that belongs to you," he thundered, "and I insist that you release me at once! Otherwise I shall report this outrage to the British Consul."

But words and attitude alike seemed lost on this motley assembly, who simply looked at each other curiously, chattered in lower tones, and finally trooped out, the woman in the orange headdress bringing up the rear with the single candle.

Then the door closed, the key clinked unpleasantly in the lock, and for the first time in his life the professor knew the meaning of absolute, unrelieved, impenetrable darkness.

Now, years of university professorship had convinced Roger Poppleton that he knew himself and could possess himself with patience under any circumstances. He was, moreover, a lecturer on the Stoic virtues, and if confronted with such a case as this in the abstract, would have philosophised over the necessity of self-control under all circumstances.

But here was a situation undreamt of in his philosphy. Rudely separated from his friends in one of the happiest moments of his life, ridiculed, insulted, browbeaten by a crowd of vicious foreigners, he had finally been locked up in this black, stuffy hole to await he knew not what torture on the morrow. The very blackness seemed to threaten all manner of horrors; it robbed him of his self-reliance and instilled into his mind a creeping fear that found outlet in the most childish performances.

Angry, panting, he felt his way to the window and pulled frantically at the solid iron bars. He shouted until he was hoarse, he kicked desperately on the unyielding panels, then leant against the door, listening eagerly for some sign from without. But the silence was as oppressive as the blackness.

Groping carefully about the room, he finally discovered the table, and in a new access of rage and fear hurled it vainly against the door, and when the table was splintered, he used the pieces to smash the glass in the window. But without was only more blackness.

Another even more angry and childish assault on door and window, and even the walls, left him so exhausted that he finally sank limply upon a long chest near the door, and tried to compose himself to sleep, in preparation for the next day's ordeal.

He was a long time going to sleep, and it seemed to him that he had hardly closed his eyes when he was awakened by voices, to find himself once more surrounded by his captors.

At his first movement the woman with the orange headdress was at his side, offering him a glass of Chianti, which he indignantly refused. She was still urging the wine and some bread upon him, when there was a stir at the door, a ripple of excited conversation among the group of Italians, and a man, evidently of the same nationality, but a step higher in the social scale, pushed his way through the crowd to the captive, and in halting English wished him good-morning.

In an instant the professor was on the alert.

"So you speak English, do you?" he said sternly. Then as the other gave a broken affirmative, he continued: "Very well; then tell me in English what this outrage means. As for your friends, to them you may say that they have kept me here one night, they may keep me here three hundred and sixty-five nights, but never from a free-born Briton will they extract one halfpenny of ransom money."

The new-comer, with an altogether unaccountable smile, turned to his countrymen, and with many wavings of the arms, and jerks of the head, and countings of the fingers, apparently translated the Professor's message.

And—still more unaccountable—as he progressed, a buzz of delight began to issue from the group round him—a buzz that swelled with every word, bursting into

a roar of joy mingled with delighted "Bravos!" as the interpreter concluded.

The next moment the crowd surrounded their prisoner, laughing, beaming, fairly dancing in such exuberance of joy and gratitude that some of the women actually attempted to kiss his hands.

But the professor's wrath had passed the point where it could be conciliated by such demonstrations, or by the new-comer's polite invitation to visit his shop and hear all about the affair over some "rich wine."

"I don't want your wine," he said. "I want you to take me to the British Consul."

And to the consul they went, where the ruffled man of learning—his real eye, usually so pacific and benevolent, glaring almost as fiercely as his glass optic—told his story.

When finally he finished his speech with an impressive demand that the brigands who kidnapped him be properly punished, the consul looked mystified, but conciliatory.

"Of course, you know, sir," he said with due deference, "we don't have brigands in Italy in this century, and you admit that you were not robbed. Besides, as you know, last night was a festive occasion, when practical jokes are in order. Still," he added hastily, as he saw an angry flush creeping over his visitor's face, "this certainly was carrying a practical joke too far, and I'll have the matter investigated, and report to you this afternoon. But who is your companion?"

In a moment the interpreter, so far standing silent in the doorway, was explaining and apologising all in a breath.

"It is ver simple," he said, with a bland smile and a shrug of the shoulders. "I tried to explain. He refuse—he refuse my wine. He asked me to take him to consul. I bring him. So.

"Dis a man have de *assistito*—what you call the lucky eye," pointing to the professor's artificial optic. "Da people see dat eye, get him in da house so he can say some numbers for buy de lottery ticket. He no understand, and dey keepa him until I came in da morna. No hurt; no do noddings. Just letta him sleep."

While the man spoke the consul had cast a surreptitious glance at the professor's glass eye, and when the interpreter finished his speech, turned to the professor with a smile of comprehension.

"I see now," he said, "and I don't wonder you found the situation incomprehensible. The fact is you've simply been made the victim of a peculiar Neapolitan superstition."

Then he proceeded to explain the difference between the *jettatura*, or evil eye, and the *assistito*, or lucky eye, and the firm belief of the peasants, strengthened by long inheritance, that any numbers spoken by the possessor of the latter were lucky numbers, and could be used to never-failing advantage in a lottery drawing.

"Your affliction brings you within the *assistito* class," he concluded, "and these people wanted you to give them some lucky numbers for the regular monthly drawings of the State lottery. It's as much a part of their life as their meals are. I suppose they couldn't get an interpreter last night, and so kept you until morning. It's too bad you couldn't have understood what they wanted, and given them the numbers before the interpreter came. Then you would have been released. But, of course, in any case," he added, "it's an outrage, and they must apologise."

"But, confound it, I gave them no numbers," said the professor, struggling hard to maintain his dignity.

"You don't suppose I would encourage such a superstition, do you?"

"How is that?" asked the consul, turning to the interpreter. "Didn't the gentleman give you the numbers?"

"Oh, yes, he do!" said the shopkeeper, with a grin of satisfaction. "He say, one night, three hundred and sixty-five. See?" exhibiting a slip of paper on which the number was written; "you play him, you win."

For a moment the professor looked sheepish, as he realised that he had been led into doing exactly what he had been expected to do. Even the consul could not suppress a smile.

"This may seem like a joke to some people," said the professor coldly, "but I want you to understand that I am going to prosecute these kidnappers of innocent Englishmen."

"I wouldn't, professor," said the consul sauvely. "I'm sorry you suffered this indignity, and I'll bring the matter before our ambassador at once. Meantime, you have the satisfaction of knowing that every one of your supposed brigands will have pawned his bedding and jewellery to back your involuntary tip."

"It's an iniquitous practice, and a disgraceful business for a Government to be in," retorted the other severely.

And though the consul protested that the people were bound to gamble, and that while a private concern would undoubtedly swindle them roundly, the Government managed things with strictest honesty, devoting its small percentage of profit to lightening the burden of taxation; the professor went away only slightly mollified, and with his mind still set on reparation.

To discover on reaching his hotel that, according to previous arrangements, the Whipples and Miss Feltham had gone to Paris, leaving word for him to follow when he had done Naples, added new fuel to the flames. And when at the Consulate that afternoon he learnt that he was offered no reparation beyond profuse apologies, his anger was so inflamed that he departed, rumbling out threats of bringing a suit against the Italian Government.

But as it happened, Professor Poppleton did no such thing. He lost some days in Rome, waiting on the Ambassador, without result. He went to Paris, vowing that he would never set foot on Italian soil again. He found that he had missed his friends, who had just left for England. Two days after he himself had returned he received the following letter:

My dear Professor,

My long-cherished visions of art study and life abroad are at last to become realities, and you are the conjuror. This may sound like nonsense, but you'll see that it's anything but nonsense when I recall to you our visit to the curio shop at Naples, when we exchanged gifts, or, rather, one gift, and the promise of another. It was those few minutes in the shop that made me acquainted with the Italian lottery ticket, half of which was to be my present to you.

The next day I put my money on a number recommended by one of the attendants of the hotel; he said it was sure to draw a prize, as it had been given to a friend of his by a man with a lucky eye—whatever that may be.

At any rate, our Consul at Naples has just informed me that I have won the chief prize; and now I'm hoping for an opportunity to redeem my promise in person.

I write to express my hope that you have returned, and will soon give me that opportunity.

Gratefully,

ALICE FELTHAM.

The professor and his wife now make their home in Rome, and one of their favourite trips is to an unenlightened place called Naples.

OWEN ROTHWELL.

SAVING THE COMPANY.

MADE any money?

Well, sir, it's a business in which you can either make or lose a lot. I've made two or three small fortunes, and lost about as much as I've made. I've got a moderate provision for the time when I get too old to travel about in this way. I think that's as much as most people can say, and I ought to be satisfied.

But I tell you, time has been when I didn't know where the next meal would come from, and half a dozen players to be provided for as well as myself. I remember one of the worst times I ever had was in the Lake District. I can laugh now, to think of that girl's sharpness, but it was no matter for laughing at that time.

I was starring it through the country with a speciality troupe—musical sketches, ventriloquists, conjurers and minstrels, with a small comedy company thrown in. Mam'selle Susine Allonette was with us (she was Sue Allen off the stage) as leading lady, and she also did some daring tightrope and trapeze business.

She was a sharp little midget, and used to give us the length of her tongue when she got cross.

But she helped me out of a bad fix grandly, the time I speak of, and I felt like giving her a little liberty.

We had been having bad luck. I hadn't been able to pay my company's salaries for three weeks, hadn't a shilling to send home to my wife, and things looked pretty bad I tell you.

When we got to the next town I had hardly money enough to pay the boys who distributed my bills. I had nearly made up my mind to sell my watch (the only thing of value I had left), pay off the men and girls as far as I could and break up the company. We came on at night from the last town, and I resolved to see what the weather was in the morning before I decided what to do.

When I got up I saw the streets were covered with mud and a sharp cold wind was blowing. It would be an awful night, and we should get no house at all. My heart sank like lead, and I wished I hadn't sent the bills out.

We should have to play that night, but it would be the last time.

I thought I would speak to my leading lady, so I went to Sue Allen's room and knocked at the door. She opened the door, and I found her mending the dress she wore in her trapeze performance (we were too poor to have new costumes just then).

"Sue," said I, "I've come to bring bad news."

"Well, what is it?" she said.

"We've got to break up," I said with a sigh.

"Now I don't see that!" returned Sue, fixing her sharp eyes on me. "What is the reason?"

"Why we've made nothing for a month. Sue, I can't pay any of you, and I know you need your money."

"Well this is a fairly large town," said Sue calmly.

"Yes, but look what wretched weather! We shan't have half a house to-night, and I can't even put a puff into the papers to coax people out. It's no use, Sue we shall have to give up!"

"Not if I know it!" says Sue, striking an attitude. "Can't you get up a sensation that will draw?"

"I've tried to think of something, and I can't," I answered. "There isn't a dodge that can be gone through without money, and that I haven't got."

"Well, I've been trying to think, too," says Miss Sue, coolly as before. "And I think we shall have a crowded house to-night."

"Who's going to fill it?" I asked.

"I am," returned Miss Sue demurely.

I gave a low whistle of incredulity.

"Oh, I mean it," said Sue.

There was an air about the girl which struck me.

"Mr. Lane," she said, as I looked silently at her, "I want my salary, and I don't want this company to go down. If you'll let me do as I please, and ask no questions, I'll fill that hall full to-night, and we shall all get our money."

"Then do as you please!" I groaned. "Anything to help me just now!"

"You give me full liberty, and ask no questions?" asked Sue.

"Yes. Go ahead."

"All right. I'm going out for a walk in ten minutes. Make some of the men walk in the direction I do, but order them on no account to come near or interrupt me. Will you?"

"Yes, I will, Sue. Where are you going?"

"Never mind that. Isn't there a wooden railway bridge near here?"

"Yes. We came past it."

"I thought so. Trains run pretty often, don't they?"

I looked at my watch.

"There will be one in half an hour," said I.

"Then I've no time to lose," said Sue. "There, be off, so that I can go."

"Look here, what are you going to do first?" I asked anxiously.

"Nothing that will hurt me, I assure you," answered Sue, laughing. "And you promised to ask no questions. You stay here, and if you hear anything extraordinary, why, then come. Order the men to do as I told you, but they must not try to stop me. I can take care of myself and they shall share the reward."

I began to catch a dim idea of what Sue intended. I said:

"Sue, you shall not run into danger."

"Be off, I tell you," commanded Sue. "I'll be in no danger. Do go, or I shall miss that train."

Well, I submitted to go out, and told two of the men that when Sue walked out they must go too, and keep her in sight, but on no account disturb her. They promised, and I went out as quickly as I could. I knew that whatever Sue meant to do was connected with the railway, and I intended to see what she did, without her knowledge.

I took a look round and posted myself where I could see all that passed, without being seen.

After a while I saw a little figure come tripping down the railway as if for a walk, and I knew it was our Sue even before I could recognise her dress.

She came walking along and deliberately began to cross the bridge by stepping on the ties.

I glanced at my watch—the train was due, and even then I heard the rumble of it. I began to tremble and feel cold, but Sue walked calmly on. If I had not known her skill on the trapeze bar I should have rushed out after her. But if she could trust herself, I could trust her, so I waited.

Presently the engine-driver saw her, and whistled. "Down brakes!"

But Sue walked on as though she heard nothing.

The engine-driver blew a fearful shriek, and did his best to slacken speed, but he couldnot stop in time. And when the train was close to her. She seemed to discover her danger, threw up her arms with a wild cry, and disappeared from view.

By the time the train had passed over the bridge and stopped a crowd had collected. I was there, and my two men, and they were crying like babies as they met me saying:

"Oh, Mr. Lane, Sue's killed! Poor Sue's killed!"

"Perhaps not," I tried to answer, white as death myself.

"Oh, she is! The train went right over her as she fell!" sobbed one of them.

I feared it was indeed true.

But when we rushed down to the bank and along under the bridge, followed by the crowd, there was our plucky little Sue, clinging to the trestle-work under the bridge, a bit pale, but not even a shred of her dress torn.

We got her out quickly, and such a time as there was then, on the bank of that river, I never saw.

As for our company—well, you never saw such antics anywhere.

I didn't know whether to cry over the daring little minx or to scold her roundly.

Of course the story flew like wild-fire, and the streets were crowded with people trying to get a glimpse of the brave little actress before we got back.

In the afternoon we put reserved seats on sale at two or three places where they had not been before, and by dark every seat was sold.

Sue's ruse was a success.

That hall was crowded half an hour before the curtain rose, and when Sue came on the stage the applause was deafening.

After the show was over we had enough to pay our bills, nearly all the back salaries, and make Sue a present of ten pounds for saving us.

Our company did not break up, but was in luck for the rest of the season.

E. B. R.

How Fame Came to Jean Maret.

THERE had not been such a spring morning in Paris for years. Everything was bathed in sunshine, the sky was of the softest blue, the pavements were intensely white, and the river blazed and glistened. The dreary winter had vanished, and it seemed that there could be nothing but happiness for everybody.

Jean Maret and his wife, an elderly couple, sat in a neatly furnished room, looking at each other with vexation plainly visible on their faces. Jean held the morning paper in his left hand, while he thrummed impatiently on the table with his right hand.

"It really is *too* provoking," he said, the vexed expression deepening on his countenance. "Here have I been striving all my life to do something to make myself famous, but have never succeeded in making my name known beyond the circle of my friends and customers; whereas Charpentier and others, who could never hope to achieve fame by their own efforts, have had it thrust upon them."

"It is very provoking," said Elise softly. "But perhaps it is for the best. We must not forget," she added, "that we have been fortunate in business and have saved money enough to allow us to live comfortably in our old age without work, while others have not been so lucky."

"Yes," returned her husband hesitatingly. He was unwilling to acknowledge anything that made him appear in any other character than that of an ill-used man. "Still, it *is* annoying to see such an insignificant person as Heron—who never did anything in his life—become the talk of all France, have his name in all the newspapers, receive visits from high officials, and a message from the Preside t himself! Of course, it will be the same for him as it was for Charpentier. Why can't the Anarchists drop a bomb outside *our* door? They never go off," he added, as his wife shrank back at the thought. "Look at this column; it's all about the bomb found under Heron's window after dusk yesterday."

Jean tossed the paper upon his wife's lap in disgust. Elise put on her glasses and ran through the report. Yes, it was vexing; she knew how much Jean longed for fame, and she was conscious that she, too, would be pleased to receive a message from the President. She half sighed as she laid the sheet on the chair and began to clear away the breakfast things.

Digitized by Google

Jean Maret seated himself by the open window and smoked his pipe while the sunshine streamed in upon him. He was very discontented—foolish old man! Why had Fate been so unkind to them? he asked himself in bitterness of spirit. Why could *he* not find a bomb on his doorstep or his window-sill? It was shabby treatment after the exemplary life he had led, and he resented it. Just then he caught the words of some passers-by—they were talking about Heron. Confound Heron! Jean dragged his pipe savagely from his lips and stood up.

"I must go now, Elise," he said to her.

"Must you go out to-day, Jean? I thought that we might have had a run out into the country as it is so fine."

"I promised old Mercier I would help him either to-day or to-morrow, Elise, and I think I had better go to-day. I must have something to occupy my thoughts to-day; I should not enjoy the little trip, I feel so vexed."

She did not reply. He fetched his hat and stick, and a light overcoat to put on in the evening, and kissed her tenderly.

"You will meet me at the café this evening, Elise," he said. "I shall be there at seven o'clock sharp, and we will have our usual little treat."

"I will be there punctually, Jean dear," she returned, looking him up and down with true wifely solicitude and straightening his tie, which was awry. "Take care of yourself. These spring days are very deceiving; the wind is often keen."

He kissed her again, and left the room and the house with a step that was less brisk than usual.

"She is a good wife," murmured Jean Maret as he walked through the streets "and she deserves more than I can give her. I am more annoyed on her account than on my own."

They had spent nearly forty years of their lives together and had been all in all to each other; they had no near relatives and their only child had died in infancy. Elise had cheered and comforted him when in trouble and difficulty, and he had always felt that she had not been sufficiently rewarded; not that *she* had complained—oh, no; she was too good for that.

Jean Maret left his friend later than he had intended, and he hurried along in order to reach the café in time and not keep Elise waiting. This weekly dinner at the café was one of the very few enjoyments that the old couple indulged in; they had kept it up for years and it was unquestionably a treat for them. For it must be remembered that they were of the old school and had not developed the expensive tastes of the present day.

The cafe was not very far from their home, and in order to reach it Jean had to pass within a few yards of the end of his own street. He was hurrying along in the darkness, close to the houses, so as to avoid the cutting east wind, when his foot kicked against something hard. He stopped abruptly, bent down to look at the object, and almost gasped for breath. It was a bomb!

For a moment he stood bewildered; then a wild idea seized him. Here was his opportunity at last. He had found a bomb! But would he gain a full share of credit if he called the police? Would it not be better to ——? Yes, he would do it!

He stooped down and lifted the engine of destruction. It was a live bomb; there was no doubt about it, for he could hear something inside. He must be quick.

Grasping it firmly, he started off at a run for his own dwelling. He was trembling with excitement, mixed with a certain amount of fear; suppose it were to go off in his hands? He ran at full speed and arrived at his door quite out of breath. He placed it on the step, gave a hasty glance round to see that there was no one about to discover it and so rob him of the coveted fame, then he walked rapidly away.

The bomb would explode and damage his house, but what did that matter? He would be the talk of Paris, of France, of the world! He would receive a message of sympathy from the President—perhaps the Chief of the Republic would call upon him or summon him to the——. He could not finish the line of reflection; his brain was in a whirl, he seemed to be walking on air.

What would Elise say? How pleased she would be that Fame had come at last. They could forgive her tardiness now. Good Elise! She would now have the honour she so well deserved!

He had now reached the door of the restaurant. He fancied he heard a dull noise in the direction of home, and he smiled as he entered the establishment. He went straight towards the corner table at which they always sat. He was late; he had kept her waiting—for she was as punctual as the sun itself, but she would not mind when she——

He stood still suddenly, gazing at the little table. Elise was not there; the chairs were unoccupied. How strange that she should have chosen another table when that one was free.

He gazed about him in search of his faithful partner, but he could not see her. Where had she gone? He began to feel uneasy; for the first time in all these years she was late. He went to a waiter who knew them both very well, and inquired for Elise; but the man had not seen her, and was positive that she had not entered the café that evening.

A horrible thought flashed across his mind. Had she—was she——? Oh, Heaven, not that!

He reeled as though struck; then he rushed out of the place like a madman. Away he went! He dropped his stick, the wind blew his hat off and his coat open; but he heeded not these trifles. With wild, staring eyes he glared down the street as soon as he arrived at the top of it. He saw the gaping crowd, and knew that the fell apparatus had done its work. And Elise?

The crowd fell back and made way for him as he approached and was recognised. Words of commiseration became audible to him, but he pushed his way frantically to the door. The police on guard at first thought of stopping him out of pity, but they stood aside and let him enter without a word. Chaos reigned within, but he went instinctively to the bedroom. There, on the bed that had been hurriedly set straight until the ambulance should come to convey her to the hospital, lay Elise, his dear, faithful wife, terribly mutilated.

With a groan he flung himself by the side of the bed and sobbed convulsively. Oh, wretched man that he was! He had murdered his wife!

Her life was fast ebbing away. She could not see him, but she knew that he was there. With a last effort she slid her hand along and touched him. He heard her murmur some words of consolation in a feeble voice.

"Elise, Elise!" he began. He was about to tell her that he, her husband, had brought this upon her, when he heard her voice, so faint that he could only just catch the words.

"You will be famous now, Jean, and I—am not suffering—much."

Then he heard a sigh, and he knew that she was at rest.

Geo. Day.

Digitized by Google

The Lustre Lasts!
Pyn-Ka Leaves no Scratches!

Pyn-ka

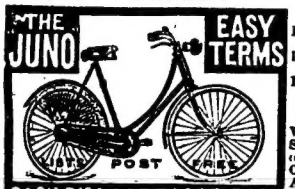
The wonderful Metal Polisher. Cleans and burnishes gold, silver, plate, copper, brass, nickel tin, glass, etc., better, quicker, and at less cost of labour and money than any other polish known.

Paste or tablets, 1d. to 6d. All dealers.

The Best Hair Dye

in the World for Lashes, Eyebrows, and Hair on the Head, with Moustache and Beard. For Ladies' Hair and for all Colours. Had at 3s. 6d., post 3s. 9d., of ALEX. ROSS, 62 Theobald's Road. High Holborn. London, W.C. Spanish Cantharides for fallen hair, 3s. 6d. 5s. 6d. & 10s. 6d.

"JUNO" CYCLES ARE THE VERY BEST.



Monthly. Roadster, £10. 16/8 Road Racer, £11. 18/4 Lady & Gent, £12 12/- 21/- £14 14/- 24/6 £16 16/- 28/- Write for New Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, sent post free. METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS' CO. LTD., 75 and 76 Bishopsgate Without, London, E.C.; and at Piccadilly Circus, exactly opposite the Criterion, London, W. JUNO Riding School, 1,700ft

NOSE MACHINE.

This is a contrivance by which the short cartilage of the nose is pressed into shape by wearing the instrument an hour daily for a short time. Price 10/6, sent free for stamps.

ALEX. ROSS,
62, Theobald's Road,
London.
Opposite Bedford Row.
(Est. 1850.)
Parcel free from observation

PALATABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.

REALLY GENUINE.

In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½lb., 9d.; 1lb., 1s. 2d.; 2lb., 2s.; including tin and postage.

MRS. CONYERS,
MORCHARD BISHOP,
DEVON.

A SPLENDID OFFER TO "SHORT STORIES" READERS.

25,000 HAND CAMERAS
at 4s. 6d. each.
£150 in Prizes
Given for Photos taken with "Short Stories" Hand Cameras.

NOTICE.—THE "SHORT STORIES" HAND CAMERA.

This Camera is being specially made for *Short Stories* by one of the largest camera manufacturers in Great Britain. This camera is listed by the makers at 10s. 6d. each, and our readers, by special arrangements, are going to be supplied with it at 4/6, together with a supply of Dry Plates, Chemicals, and a Book of Instructions enabling anyone without previous knowledge to take a photo with the greatest of ease. A Competition List will be sent with each camera. 6d. extra will be charged for parcel post, 5s. in all. This camera has a powerful lens, double dark slide, focussing screen, shutter for time and snap-shot photos. A well-made and neat camera.

"SHORT STORIES" TOURISTS' CAMERA.

This camera carries 6 quarter-plates, and is fitted with a view-finder and shutter for time and snap-shot exposures. This is a splendid camera to take on your holidays. Only 2,000 of these will be sent out. The e are offered to our readers by the makers for the moderate sum of 7/6, and 6d. parcel postage; 8/- in all. This is a splendid opportunity for securing a splendid camera for a very moderate sum. With each will be given Dry Plates, Chemicals, and Book of Instructions, Lists of Prizes, and Particulars of Competitions.

1,500 GRAPHIC STEREOSCOPES GIVEN FREE,
TOGETHER WITH 12 STEREOSCOPE SLIDES.

Everyone of our readers sending for the "SHORT STORIES" TOURIST CAMERA for 14 days from date of this paper, will be presented with the GRAPHIC STEREOSCOPE and 12 slides. This is a splendid instrument. By means of this beautiful instrument, the photographs are rendered so vivid, the objects stand out with such distinctness, that observers would almost think they were looking at nature itself, the illusion is so perfect. GIVEN FREE with tourist camera. An extra charge of 6d. for package and postage will be made, making in all, 8/6.

RULES.—All persons sending must mark on the left-hand top-corner of the envelope the words "*Short Stories* Camera," and send it along with postal order for amount to the manufacturers,

THE SILVERITE CO., LONDON ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

NOTICE.—No person will be supplied with more than one Camera.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR.

WHY INDUCE HEART DISEASE TO CURE YOUR HEAD

When you can get a real safe remedy like KAPUTINE?

Dr. Thurston, Licentiate, of the Royal College of Physicians, writes November 16th: "Knowing the formulæ from which KAPUTINE is compounded, I unhesitatingly recommend its use in preference to crude Antifibrin and other synthetic drugs which, unfortunately for sufferers, are so commonly used for Headache, and which have undoubtedly injurious effects on the Heart, Brain, and Vescicle tissues generally."

NOTHING LIKE KAPUTINE. NOTHING SIMILAR. NOTHING AS GOOD.

All leading Chemists sell it. Packets of 18 doses 1s. Sample 1d.

After 13 Years' Suffering, Cured for 1s.

The Rev. T. TAYLOR, Vicar of St. Bredward, Cornwall, writes: "Owing to a severe accident while riding, my wife has for the past thirteen years been subject to violent attacks of neuralgia. The relief she has experienced from KAPUTINE has been speedy and effectual. KAPUTINE, while it is efficacious in its use, is attended with none of the disagreeable after effects which she has experienced in the case of other drugs."

After 10 Weeks' Suffering, Cured for 1d.

DEER RECTORY, MINTLAW, ABERDEEN,
From Rev. J. H. BURN. NOVEMBER 8TH, 1897.

"My own cure with one dose of KAPUTINE was marvellous after ten weeks incessant neuralgia.

Used also by Her Grace the Countess of Cavan, Lady Dashwood, The Countess of Munster, Surgeon Lieut.-Col. Baker, etc., etc.

Nothing Similar. Nothing as Good. **KAPUTINE CURES HEADACHE IN 10 MINUTES.**

If you enclose stamped envelope to A. M. Kaputine Ltd., Huddersfield, you will get free samples by return.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR.

Digitized by Google

NOTES OF INTEREST.

N. S. W.—The temperature of the towns of New South Wales in summer is not appreciably different from that of many parts of Europe. Thus, Sydney corresponds with Toulon, and is four degrees warmer than Paris; and the Manaro Plains correspond with the English Midland Counties. But the warm weather in that colony has more "staying" properties than the specimens we get here.

W. wishes to know if I have any idea of the weight of a whale.——— Nilsson, a Norwegian zoologist, says that the weight of the Greenland whale is 100 tons or 224,000lbs. He further states that it is equal to that of eighty-eight elephants or 440 bears. The Greenland whale may be described as the "heavy weight" of the ocean.

B. V. B. writes to say that he thinks he has discovered the reason for the hitherto unaccountable dislike women have for mice. It appears that for centuries, even until quite recently, it was a common belief that the soul of an unbaptised child assumed the form of a mouse, and came back to haunt the home of its relatives. As such, the little creature inspired no little terror. "Probably," writes B. V. B., "this has become an hereditary instinct, and has outlived the cause."

J. G.—Within the last eleven years, the number of railway stations in Germany has been increased by 2,500. There are now nearly 9,000 railway stations in the Fatherland.

T. K. asks: "Where does nickel come from? The consumption of this metal must be increasing considerably."———Nickel is the principal component of the alloy known as German silver, and is now of greater importance than formerly, owing to its employment in the manufacture of nickel steel. The supply of nickel is obtained from two districts only; one is a small region in New Caledonia, the other is the Sudbury district in Ontario. If any miner were lucky enough to "strike nickel" it would be a real Klondyke for him.

K. L.—The question of the proportion of the wall surface of a room to be occupied by windows has been answered differently by various experts. One authority says one-eighth, another considers the proper proportion to be one-sixth. A high authority stated some years ago that there should be one square foot of glass to every hundred cubic feet that a room contained. Windows ought always to be placed in the longest side of the apartment.

As the result of the plebiscite which was made recently to discover the desirability of republishing "The Final War" by Mr. Louis Tracy, in *Short Stories*, I have now to inform readers that this stirring serial will start in the Bank Holiday Number of *Short Stories*. It will be profusely illustrated with stirring sketches, and these will be of additional interest to those who perused the tale while it ran as a serial through the pages of *Pearson's Weekly*. I should be much obliged to readers if they would incidentally mention these facts to those people who do not regularly see *Short Stories*, for I am sure that there are many thousands of people who would gladly read "The Final War" if they had the opportunity of knowing that it was to again appear.

Alter.—The name "agate" is derived from the name of the river Achates, in Sicily, near which these stones were found in abundance by the ancients. They are now found in Scotland, Saxony and Hungary, and are brought from China and the East Indies.

Lover asks a question which is calculated to upset the equanimity of many young people: "Has there ever been a law against kissing, and don't you think it would be a good thing if there were such a law now? I know that a man must not kiss a woman against her will, or a woman kiss a man against his will."———I like the last clause immensely. As to the second half of your question, no, I certainly do not think that it would be a good thing to have such a law in this country. Whatever would our country lanes be like if—— But the idea is too terrible for words! It may interest you to know that, in accordance with a law of the New Haven colony in 1660, Jacobeth Murline and Sarah Tuttle were prosecuted for "setting down on a cheste together, his arms about her waiste, and her arme upon his shoulder or about his neck, and continuing in that sinful posture about half-an-hour, in which time he kyssed her and she kyssed him, or they kyssed one another, as ye witnesses testified."

Buz asks: "Is the buzzing of winged insects due to the exertion of flying?" —— — The humming noise produced by winged insects is not a vocal sound. It is a result of the undulations imparted to the air by the vibrations of their wings, and ceases when the insects alight—which would not be the case if it were due to exertion. Insects move their wings at an almost incredible rate when flying; for instance, it has been scientifically proved that the gnat's wings vibrate 15,000 times a second.

Nut.—Large quantities of hazel nuts come from Turkey. They are shipped from Trebizond and Kerassund; during 1897 the former port shipped 137,000cwt., valued at £92,260, of which this country took £2,250, while the shipment from Kerassund was larger. The fruit gardens in the districts served by those ports are very extensive. A large trade is done in dried apricots.

C. E.—The strange custom of "whistling for bait" prevails among the fisher class of Ceylon. Some of the natives of Colombo are constantly engaged in fishing on the sea-shore, and this is the way they get their bait: A fisherman runs down some yards to meet an advancing wave, agitating the water, and probably the sand also, with the fingers of one hand; he whistles all the time. When the wave retreats he follows it, and almost invariably finds a long worm at the spot where he agitated the water. Of course the natives believe that the whistling acts as a charm, and makes the worm rise to the surface.

L. A.—The English statute acre was fixed at 4,840 square yards by an Act passed in 1824. At one time the acre was an uncertain quantity and varied in different parts of the country. It is probable that the word originally signified cultivated land, and was applied to the extent of land that could be ploughed by one person in one day. If that be so, what are we to conclude from the fact that the Cheshire acre contained 10,240 square yards and the Leicestershire acre only had 2,308?

SHORT STORIES' ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0	10	0
Double ,, ,, ,,	1	0	0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10	0	0
Half-page ,, ,, ,, ...	5	0	0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2	10	0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1	5	0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12	10	0
,, half	6	5	0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Back blooks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, July **26th**, if intended for the Issue on sale Aug. **9th**, and dated Aug. **13th**. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., at Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A CHANCE OF A LIFETIME.

GIGANTIC CLEARANCE SALE.

£50,000 worth of Goods Offered at Half Price.

THE ENORMOUS STOCK OF CARPETS, CURTAINS, SHEETS, BLANKETS, QUILTS, &C., MUST BE CLEARED WITHOUT REGARD TO COST, OWING TO THE L.C.C. REQUIRING PRESENT PREMISES FOR STREET IMPROVEMENTS.

New Premises having to be acquired by us, this Sale is held in order to Clear Out Heavy Stocks previous to the removal. NEW GOODS have to be sacrificed, together with all Regular Stocks, as it would be almost impossible to remove the Valuable and Heavy Stocks to New Premises without great risk and loss by damage to the Goods in transit, and this renders AN ABSOLUTE CLEARANCE IMPERATIVE. The magnificent opportunity is therefore afforded the readers of *Short Stories* of buying the NEW SEASON'S GOODS that are just coming in fresh from the looms at prices lower than the cost of production; and in many cases the Goods are being offered at less than HALF PRICE.

This Offer Will Not be Repeated.

ALL GOODS WARRANTED ABSOLUTELY PERFECT IN EVERY WAY. Money Willingly Returned if not Approved

Lot 1.—4s. Lace Curtains for 1s. 11d. These beautiful Lace Curtains, containing about 6 yards in the pair, 48in. wide, shaded ground, taped edges, with handsome double borders. Undoubtedly the cheapest ever offered. Special Offer: 3 pairs for 5s. 6d. Satisfaction guaranteed. **4s. Lace Curtains for 1s. 11d.**

7s. Lace Curtains for 3s. 11d. Lot 2.—7s. Lace Curtains for 3s. 11d. per pair, measuring 3½yd. long, by 52in. wide, shaded ground, taped edges and handsome double borders; wash easily. 3 pairs for 11s. 3d. Money returned if not approved.

Lot 3.—Specially handsome Drawing-room Design, entirely new and most successful. In white or cream, with scolloped and taped edges, made from thoroughly sound cotton yarns; warranted to wear well. Sale price, 5s. 11d. per pair. Each Curtain measures 3½yd. long by 60in. wide. Special Offer: 3 pairs for 17s. Money returned if not approved. **10s. 6d. Lace Curtains for 5s. 11d.**

Lot 7.—**10,000 Special Extra Quality, Heavy Loom Kitchen Table Cloths**, made from the heaviest and strongest Linen Yarns. Numerous artistic patterns. Specially recommended for hard wear. Warranted to give the best possible satisfaction, being very neat, inexpensive, and durable.

Size 54in. by 45in., price 1s. 2d. each, or 3 for 3s. 3d.
Size 54in. by 58in., price 1s. 5d. each, or 3 for 4s. 0d.
Size 62in. by 62in., price 1s. 11d. each, or 3 for 5s. 3d.
Size 68in. by 62in., price 2s. 2d. each, or 3 for 5s. 11d.

Lot 22.—10s. 6d. White Scotch Blankets for 5s. 9d. per pair, measuring about 56in. by 76in.; light, warm, and durable. Admittedly the cheapest blankets ever offered. Special Offer: 3 pairs for 15s. 6d. Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned. **10s. 6d. White Scotch Blankets for 5s. 6d.**

25s. Special Heavy Blankets for 14s. 9d. Lot 23.—25s. Special Heavy Witney Yorkshire Blankets for 14s. 9d., measuring 75in. by 96in. Manufactured entirely of pure long staple wool, bleached by the sun and beautifully white. Give endless wear, and are easily washed. For perfection of finish, durability, and economy, they are unequalled. Special Offer: 3 pairs for 42s. Money returned if not approved.

WITNEY BLANKETS.

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE.

Lot. 24.—800 pairs of best quality Witney Blankets, with fancy borders, very soft, warm, of great durability. Made from the best wool, and warranted to give every satisfaction. Prices given below are little more than half the original cost.

Size	Weight.	Price per Pair.	3 Pairs for
53in. by 70in.	4lb.	6s. 3d.	18s.
60in. by 80in.	6lb.	7s. 9d.	22s.
70in. by 90in.	8lb.	11s. 6d.	33s.
75in. by 96in.	9lb.	13s. 0s.	37s.
80in. by 99in.	10lb.	15s. 3d.	43s.
86in. by 104in.	11lb.	16s. 9d.	48s.

Lot 30.—9s. Bleached Twill Sheets for 4s. 11d., measuring 64in. by 84in. Made from the best cotton yarns, thoroughly shrunk, soft finish, and hemmed ready for use. Special Offer: 3 pairs for 14s. 3d. Satisfaction guaranteed. **9s. Twilled Sheets for 4s. 11d.**

15s. 6d. Sheets for 7s. 11d. Lot 31.—15s. 6d. Bleached Twill Sheets for 7s. 11d., measuring 90in. by 100in. Made from the best cotton yarns, thoroughly shrunk, soft, finish, and hemmed ready for use. Special Offer: 3 pairs for 22s. Money returned if not approved.

Lot 39.—1,500 yards of Best Quality Kidderminster Carpeting, 36 inches wide, at 1s. 11d. per yard; usual price 3s. 6d. per yard. Can be supplied in numerous handsome and effective designs and rich colourings to harmonise with all requirements. Impossible to repeat this offer. Money returned if not approved. **3s. 6d. Best Quality Kidderminster Carpeting for 1s. 11d.**

3s. Best Brussels Stair Carpet for 1s. 9d. Lot 48.—3s. Brussels Carpeting for 1s. 9d. per yard, 22 inches wide. Handsomely bordered, superior quality, light and dark shades, magnificent design and colourings. Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned

10,000 RUGS

GIVEN AWAY.

GUARANTEED GENUINE BARGAINS.

Lot 50.—**THIS PHENOMENAL OFFER** is made to the readers of *Short Stories* only. On receipt of Postal Order for 6s., or 74 stamps, we will forward DIRECT FROM OUR LOOMS to your address, one of our **10/6** genuine **SEAMLESS, WOVEN, REVERSIBLE CARPETS**, suitable for Drawing-room, Dining-room, Bedroom, etc., handsomely bordered and woven in 20 different patterns and art colourings to suit all requirements, and **large enough to cover any ordinary sized room.** These Carpets will be sold as an advertisement for the goods of the British Carpet Weaving Company BELOW THE ACTUAL COST OF PRODUCTION. They are made of material equal to wool, and, being a speciality of our own, can only be obtained Direct from our Looms, thus saving the Purchasers all Middle Profits.

GIVEN AWAY.—WITH EVERY CARPET WE SHALL ABSOLUTELY GIVE AWAY A VERY HANDSOME **RUG TO MATCH**; OR WE WILL SEND **TWO CARPETS AND TWO RUGS FOR 10/6.**

MONEY WILLINGLY RETURNED IF NOT APPROVED.

THOUSANDS of REPEAT ORDERS & UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS RECEIVED.

"SHORT STORIES" COUPON
On receipt of this Coupon and P.O.O. for amount we guarantee to send any goods as above.
THE BRITISH CARPET WEAVING CO.

BRUSSELETTE CARPETS.

ADMITTEDLY THE CHEAPEST IN THE WORLD.

Seamless, Woven, and Reversible, Rich Turkey Patterns and Colourings, Superior Quality, with Handsome Border to match; a Marvel of Excellence and Beauty.

Lot 60. SIZES and PRICES. No.	ft. in.	ft. in.	Sale Price.	Former Price.
1	9 0 by	6 0	5/6	9/0
2	9 0 by	7 6	7/0	11/9
3	9 0 by	9 0	8/6	13/6
4	10 6 by	7 6	8/9	13/9
5	10 6 by	9 0	10/-	15/6
6	12 0 by	9 0	11/6	18/0

Lot 60. SIZES and PRICES. No.	ft. in.	ft. in.	Sale Price.	Former Price.
7	12 0 by	10 6	13/6	20/6
8	13 6 by	10 6	15/3	24/0
9	12 0 by	12 0	15/3	24/0
10	13 6 by	12 0	17/0	27/0
11	15 0 by	12 0	19/0	32/0
12	18 0 by	12 0	22/9	36/0

These Carpets are splendid imitations of real Brussels Carpets, the designs having been carefully copied from the originals, both as regards colourings and patterns, so that when in use it is almost impossible, except by close scrutiny, to detect the difference. All designs are registered, and deservedly considered works of art. We can confidently recommend them for use in the dining and drawing rooms, or any rooms and landings where hard wear is a necessity.

GIVEN AWAY.

As an advertisement for the introduction of these goods to all readers of *Short Stories* we have decided to give away to every purchaser a very handsomely-woven Hearthrug, 6 feet long and 3 feet wide, to match carpets in colours, etc.

THOUSANDS of REPEAT ORDERS & UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS RECEIVED.

DEAR SIR,— 9 Bedford Row, High Wycombe, Bucks.

I have seen some of the Carpets and rugs sent by your firm, and think they are really a marvel. Please forward goods as follows, etc.—Yours faithfully, Rev. F. H. MAY

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR MONEY WILLINGLY REFUNDED.

All Orders despatched same day as received. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to J. HARGREAVES, and crossed UNION BANK. ADDRESS:

THE BRITISH CARPET WEAVING COMPANY, Sale Dept., 31 OLD STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Digitized by Google

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.

BEECHAM'S PILLS.

FOR ALL

BILIOUS AND NERVOUS DISORDERS,

SUCH AS

Sick Headache, Constipation,

Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion,

Disordered Liver, & Female Ailments.

Prepared only by the Proprietor, THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire. Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere, in Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full Directions. (The 1s. 1½d. Box contains Fifty-six Pills.)

THE SALE NOW EXCEEDS SIX MILLION BOXES PER ANNUM.

Anticipate Your Holidays and Consult

BEECHAM'S PHOTO-FOLIO.

A GREAT PUBLISHING SUCCESS, being the most complete series of views of the British Isles yet placed within reach of the people. Seven millions of these books have been printed since January, 1897. The series has been published in book form, arranged in local combination, each book containing **24** photographic reproductions of well-selected views of the most interesting objects and places of architectural and historical interest, and the choicest bits of scenery and beauty in each district. The series consist of nearly 3,000 views, which are beautifully reproduced on specially prepared English-made art paper. The following 120 Volumes now on sale.

PRICE ONE PENNY PER VOLUME.

ENGLAND AND WALES (86 vols.)—Aberystwyth—Barmouth and Dolgelly—Bath—Bettws-y-Coed—Birmingham—Blackpool—Bournemouth—Bridlington Quay—Brighton (2 vols.)—Bristol—Cambridge—Canterbury, Deal, etc.—Cardiff, Penarth and District—Cheltenham and Gloucester—Chester—Clacton-on-Sea, Brightlingsea, and Walton-on-the-Naze—Clovelly and Bideford—Colwyn Bay—Cornwall (2 vols.)—Derbyshire, vol. 1 (Buxton District), vol. 2 (Matlock District)—Durham, Sunderland, etc.—Eastbourne—Exeter—Falmouth and Truro—Folkestone and Dover—Harrogate—Hastings and St. Leonards—Ilfracombe—Lake District (3 vols.)—Leamington and Warwick—Lincoln—Liverpool—Llandudno—Lynton and Lynmouth—Lytham—London (8 vols.)—Malvern and Worcester—Manchester—Margate and Herne Bay—Morecambe and Lancaster—New Brighton—Newcastle-on-Tyne, etc.—North Wales Coast (Conway to Carnarvon—Nottingham—Oxford—Plymouth—Portsmouth and Southsea—Ramsgate—Redcar and Saltburn—Rhyl, Richmond, Barnard Castle—Ripon, Bolton Abbey, etc.—Scarborough—Sheffield—Skegness, Woodhall Spa, etc.—Snowdon and Llanberis—Southampton, etc.—Southend-on-Sea—Southport—Stratford-on-Avon—Swansea and District—Teignmouth, etc.—Tenby and St. Davids—Thames Valley (2 vols.)—Torquay—Tynemouth, Shields, etc.—Valley of the Severn—Valley of the Wye—Weston-Super-Mare—Weymouth—Whitby—Yarmouth, etc.—York.

SCOTLAND (20 vols.)—Edinburgh—Edinburgh and Rosslyn—Glasgow and Paisley—The Clyde—Rothesay, Isle of Arran, etc.—Ayr and Land of Burns—Dumfries and District—Melrose and Land of Scott—North Berwick, Dunbar, etc.—Forth Bridge District—Perthshire—Stirling District—Trossachs and Loch Lomond—Loch Fyne—Inverary, etc.—Oban, Ben Nevis, Iona, etc.—Caledonian Canal District—Dundee, St. Andrews, etc.—Aberdeen and Deeside—Inverness and District—The Western Highlands.

IRELAND (6 vols.)—Dublin, Bray, etc.—Warrenpoint, Rostrevor—Belfast, Bangor, etc.—Londonderry, etc.—Limerick, Galway, etc.—Killarney, Queenstown, etc.

ISLE OF MAN (3 vols.)—Douglas District—Ramsey District—Port Erin District. ISLE OF WIGHT (3 vols.). CHANNEL ISLANDS (2 vols.)—Jersey, Guernsey, and Sark.

BEECHAM'S PHOTO-FOLIO is on sale at most Newsagents and Booksellers, but persons unable to purchase from their bookseller any particular Volumes, can obtain all they require by sending One Penny for each Volume, with cost of postage added, to

THE PROPRIETOR OF BEECHAM'S PILLS, ST. HELENS, LANCASHIRE.

Postage costs ½d. for single copies, and 3d. for one dozen copies; if complete set of 120 books is taken, they will be sent post free.